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Summer 2011

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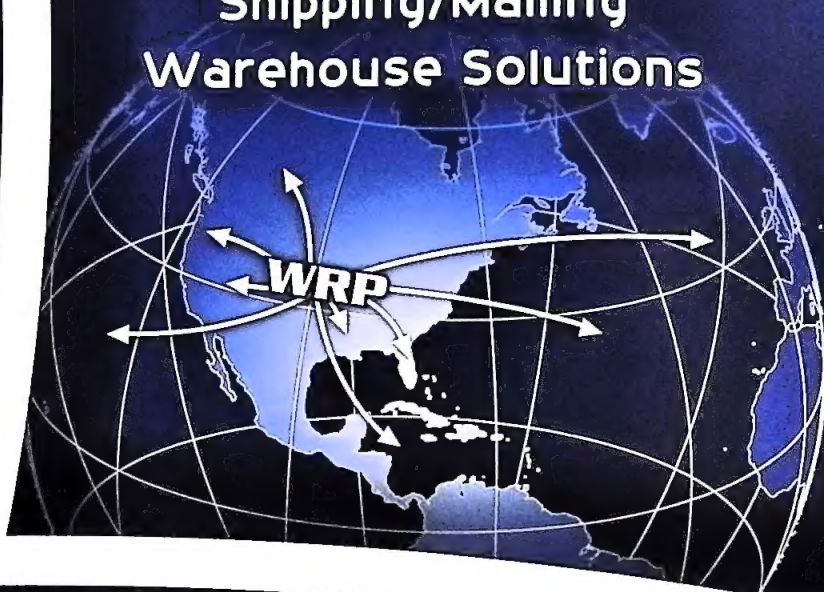
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A watershed moment

Seldom in railroading has major change occurred as abruptly as it did on May 1, 1971. On that date, all but a handful of railroads exited the intercity passenger business and turned over the operations to a new quasi-governmental company, Amtrak. For the railroads, it meant relief from a financial burden that, in some cases, threatened their very survival. For travelers, it meant a renewed commitment to high-quality passenger trains, by an entity for which that was the core mission.

But it wasn't all relief and commitment. Some railroads viewed passenger trains, money-losers or not, as part of their identity, and surrendered them with some reluctance. For Amtrak's part, saving the passenger train entailed gutting it: 47 percent of passenger route-miles and 65 percent of train-miles did not survive May 1.

Forty years later, we examine both sides of this watershed moment—the passing of the old order and the arrival of the new—in this special issue. We believe passenger trains have a future in American transportation, and we're glad something was done four decades ago to keep them from disappearing. But in a CLASSIC TRAINS context, the events of April 30–May 1, 1971, marked the end of more than a century of tradition, pride, and glory—the sunset for the limiteds.

Robert S. McGonigal



Ted Benson

April 30, 1971: Santa Fe's *San Francisco Chief* races down the San Joaquin Valley near Empire, Calif., for the final time.

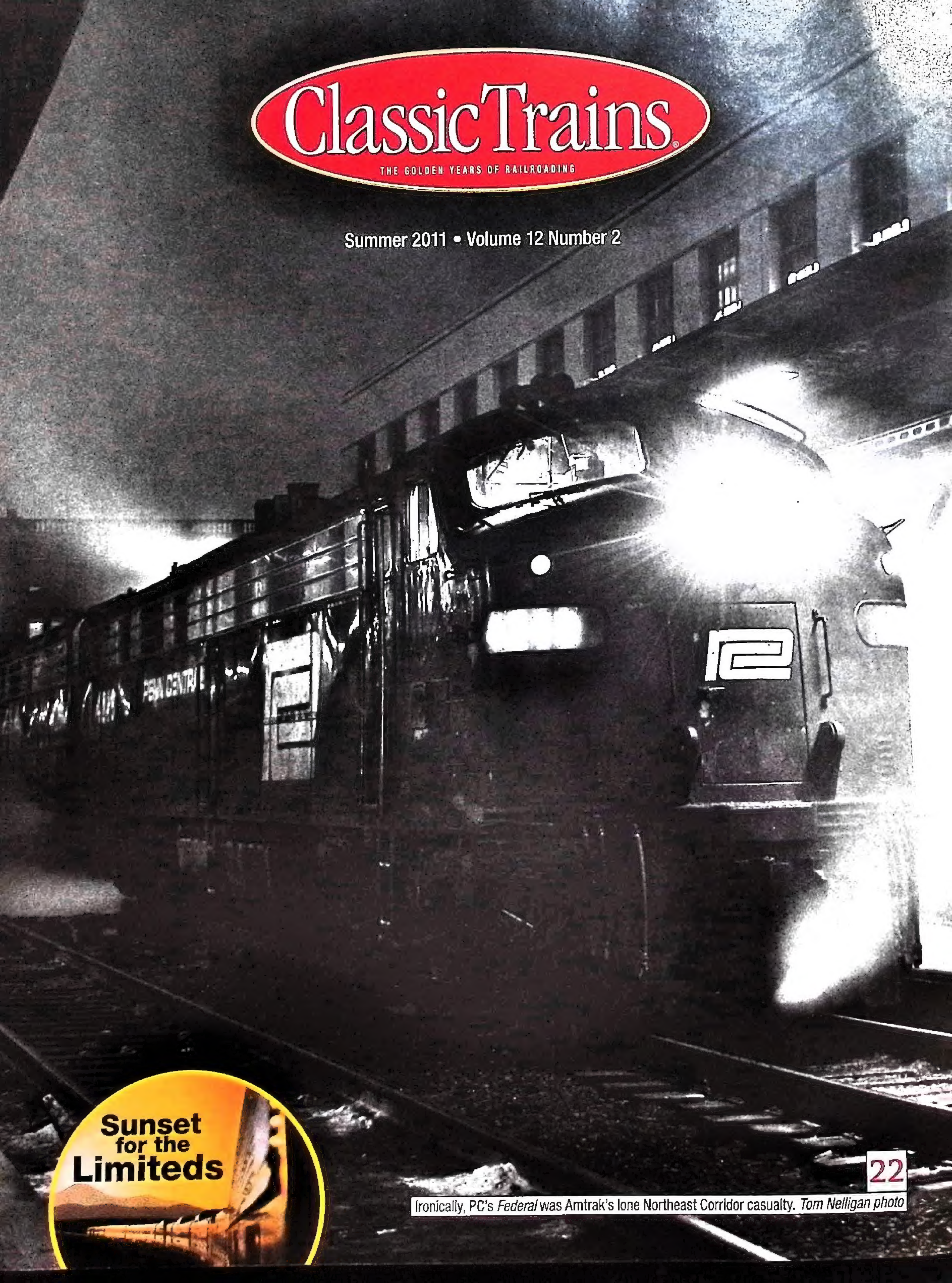
Sunset
for the
Limiteds



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THE GOLDEN YEARS OF RAILROADING

Summer 2011 • Volume 12 Number 2



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Ironically, PC's *Federal* was Amtrak's lone Northeast Corridor casualty. Tom Nelligan photo



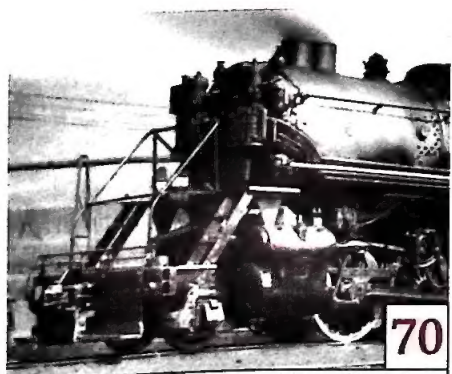
D&H's PA's were the target on a 10-state trek



Were trains worth traveling again? Yes and no



A reluctant joiner of Amtrak remained vigilant



Little road, big engines, and first of their type

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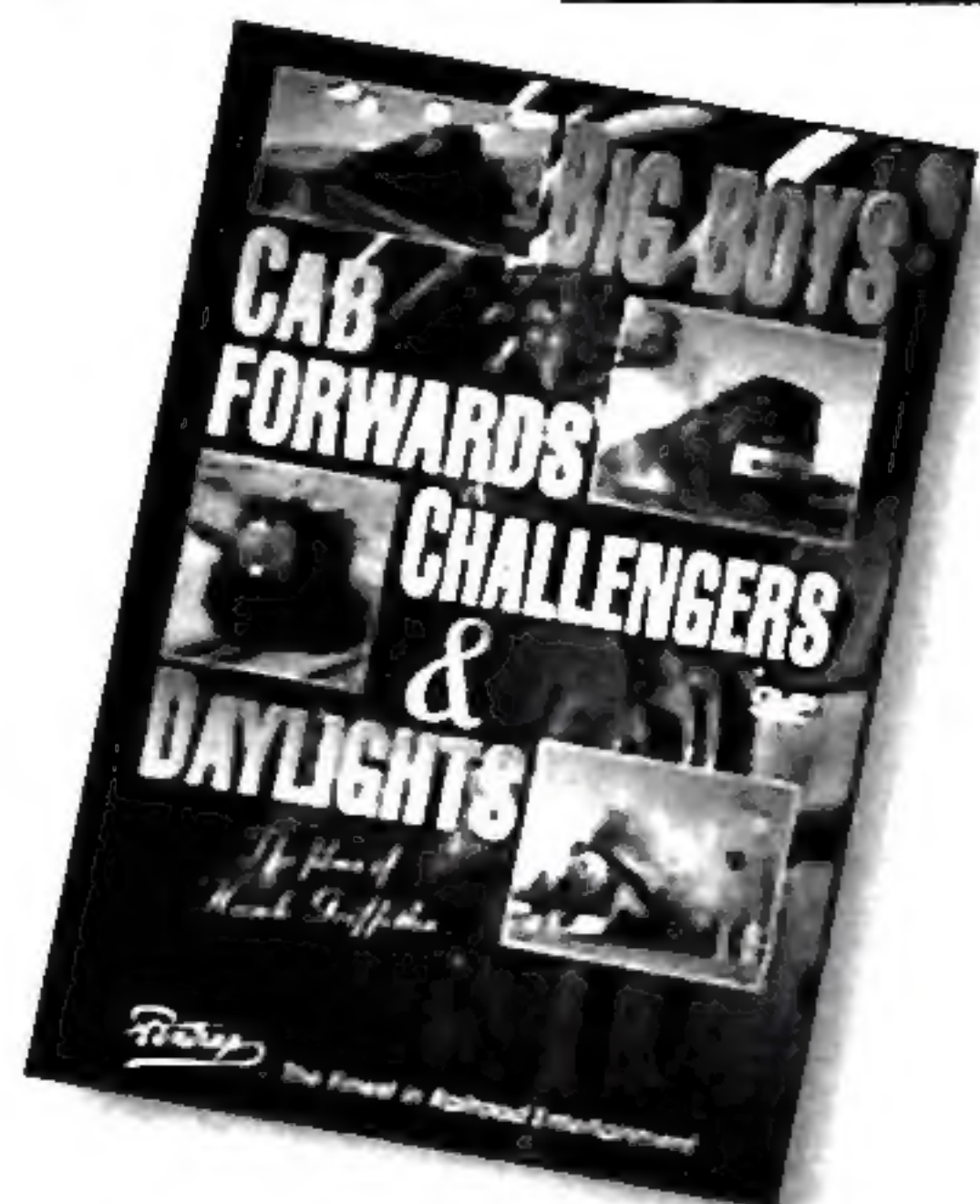
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On the cover: Symbolizing the run up to Amtrak, the *California Zephyr*, arguably the greatest streamliner of all, briefly faces the sunset on its eastward trek into Nevada. *J. David Ingles photo.*

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Contributors

JOHN W. BARRIGER IV ["Disbanding the Tribe," pages 60-63] was born in St. Louis in 1927. A third generation railroader, he grew up in Washington, D.C., graduated from MIT and Yale Graduate School of Transportation, and served in the Navy at the end of World War II. Jack started with the Santa Fe in 1950 as a Traveling Car Agent and retired as Vice President and Assistant to the Chairman 38 years later. In 1984 he founded the John W. Barriger III National Railroad Library in St. Louis, named for his father. Currently he is occupied with railroad consulting, international rail travel, sailboat racing, skiing, and enjoying eight grandchildren. This is Jack's first CLASSIC TRAINS byline.

BRUCE GOLDBERG ["Growing Up With Amtrak," pages 50-59], of Silver Spring, Md., parlayed his chance 1972 *Metroliner* meeting with Harold Graham into a nearly four-decade, multimodal transportation career with Amtrak, Greyhound, USAirways, the Civil Aeronautics Board, and the U.S. Department of Transportation. In addition to several articles in TRAINS and other magazines about the *Metroliners*, the New York & Long Branch Railroad, and air-rail services around the world, Bruce also is the author of an invaluable reference, *Amtrak, the First Decade* (Alan Books, 1981), which details early schedules and train consists. This is Bruce's first article in CLASSIC TRAINS. In the photo, he's about to board the first revenue *Acela Express* run out of Washington, D.C.



LARRY GOOLSBY ["The Colorful, Fast Seaboard Air Line," pages 18-21] was born in Woodland, Ga., on the Atlantic Coast Line's Western Division main line (the former Atlanta, Birmingham & Coast), just in time to remember steam's last days. A lifelong ACL enthusiast and historian, he is a charter member of the Atlantic Coast Line & Seaboard Air Line Railroads Historical Society, for which he serves as secretary-treasurer. Larry lives near Washington, D.C., where he works as director of legislative affairs for



the American Public Human Services Association. He has written two books—*Atlantic Coast Line Passenger Service* (TLC Publishing, 1999) and *Atlanta, Birmingham & Coast* (ACL&SALHS, 2000)—while a third, on Seaboard passenger service, will be published soon by TLC. Larry writes frequently for the historical society's quarterly, *Lines South*, and has contributed to and edited many other southeastern rail publications. This is his third byline for CLASSIC TRAINS, following the ACL "Fallen Flags Remembered" entry in Spring 2009 and the "Bird's-Eye View" of SAL's West Jacksonville shops in Spring 2011.

J. DAVID INGLES ["Ride 'Em While You Can," pages 32-43], Senior Editor of CLASSIC TRAINS, needs only a couple of routes to keep his "Amtrak mileage map" current, the *Downeaster* and the eastbound *Sunset Limited* in east Texas, which in UP's directional running normally uses



the former MoPac from Houston to Beaumont. Otherwise, Dave has missed riding Amtrak on only four short-lived regular route segments, all in the 1970s, in Florida, Texas, Washington, and Ontario. As for April 1971, he wishes he'd caught PC No. 316 [pages 44-49], as his mileage map still lacks Indianapolis-Galion! He's pictured with D&H PA No. 16 at Rensselaer, N.Y.

BERT PENNYPACKER ["Curves + Hills + Bridge Traffic = 2-6-6-4," pages 70-75], who died in 2009, was a prolific rail author and photographer. He wrote numerous books, dozens of stories for TRAINS magazine, and eight previous CLASSIC TRAINS articles. Although he specialized in steam-era topics, he reported on the *Metroliner* program and other issues of the 1960s.

DON PHILLIPS ["The Road to Rescue," pages 22-31] is a veteran transportation reporter who covered the beginnings of Amtrak and Conrail for UPI before moving to the *Washington Post*, where he specialized in U.S. rail-

roads and airlines, and the *International Herald Tribune*, for which he covered transportation worldwide. Don has been contributing photos and articles to *TRAINS* since 1966—and has been a monthly columnist for a total of 28 years—but this is his first *CLASSIC TRAINS* byline.



JERRY A. PINKEPANK ["Bird's-Eye View: On Detroit's Riverfront," pages 76–77], whose 50-year career as a railroad officer, consultant, and author spans key positions and projects at Burlington Northern, Soo Line, and BNSF, as well as numerous articles and books including the first two *Diesel Spotter's Guides* (Kalmbach, 1967 and 1973), continues to be active in railroad consulting and publishing. A native of Lansing, Mich., Jerry lives in Seattle, Wash.; this is his fifth byline in a *CLASSIC TRAINS* publication.

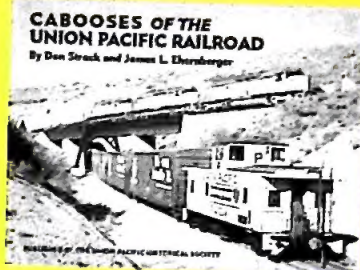
JIM SHAUGHNESSY ["The Swamp Rats," pages 86–91], the widely known and respected photographer from Troy, N.Y., chased down the last of steam in the 1950s in many far-flung locales, several quests among which have been in "The Shaughnessy Files," which has appeared regularly in *CLASSIC TRAINS* since Fall 2007.

WILLIAM BENNING STEWART ["Ghost Train to Cleveland," pages 44–49], enjoyed many *Southwestern Limited* trips to New York with his parents in the 1950s and became captivated by the experiences provided by that fast-flying first-class hotel on wheels, from the welcomes offered by trainmen, porters, waiters, and attendants to the long-anticipated dining car dinner on *Mercury* china to the pure joy of the overnight journey in a moving bed with a picture window overlooking the ever-changing operations of his favorite railroad. Bill's one previous *CLASSIC TRAINS* byline, a paean to NKP's Berkshires, appeared in our Fall 2005 issue.

JIM WRINN ["Argent's Rat Pack Lives On," page 92] has been active in rail preservation for over 30 years and has been Editor of *TRAINS* magazine since 2004. This is his second piece in *CT*.

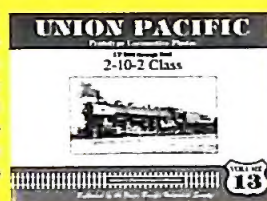
KARL ZIMMERMANN ["Streamliner Curtain Calls," pages 64–69] has written extensively on passenger-train travel for numerous publications including *Passenger Train Journal*, for which he is a columnist, and *TRAINS*. Among his many books is *CZ: The Story of the California Zephyr* (Delford Press, 1972). ■

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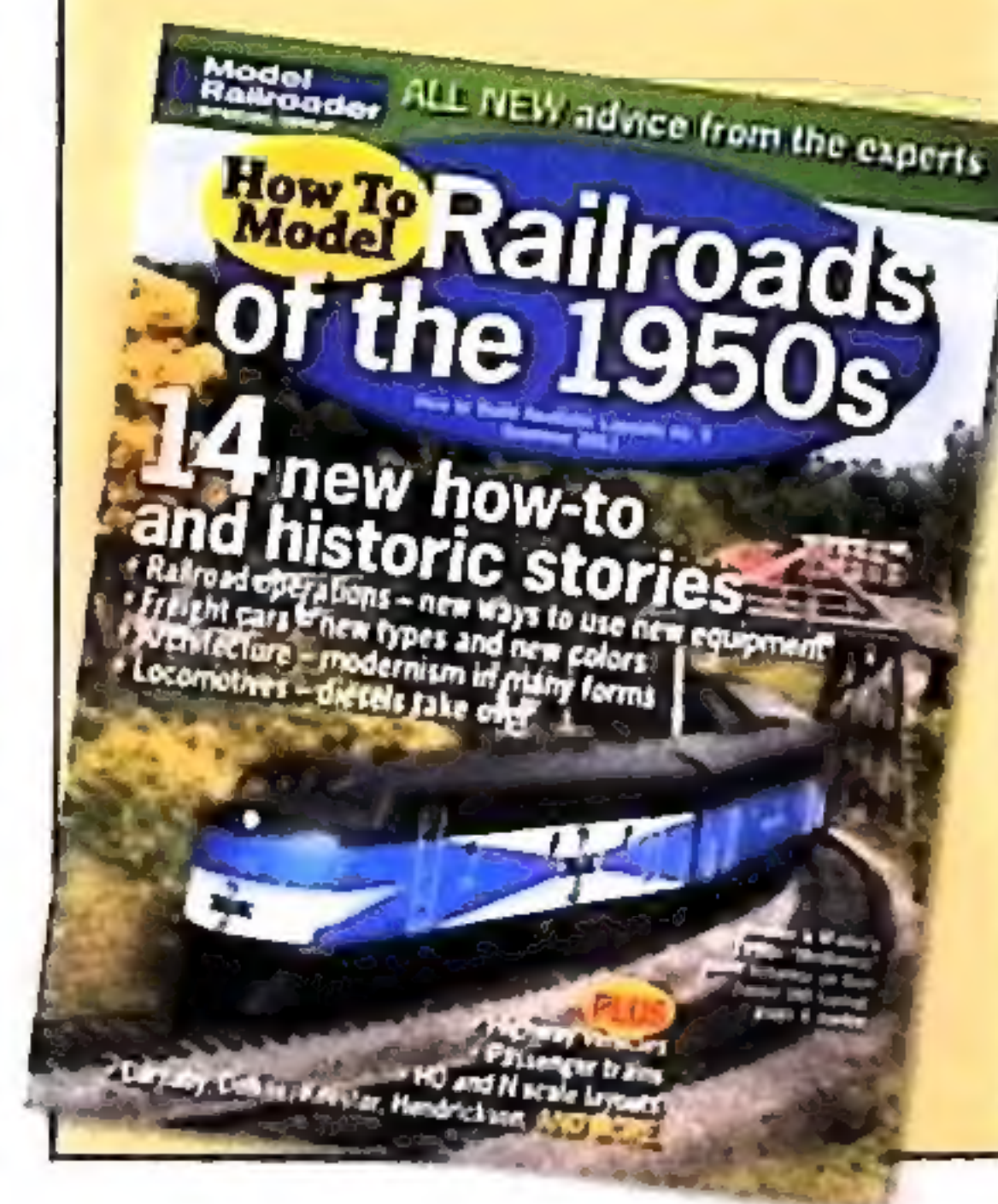


Linn H. Westcott

Today the plant and equipment of America's railroads are in the best shape they've ever been, a far cry from the decrepitude that plagued many properties in the 1960s and '70s. But check out this view from the early 1950s west of Walkerton, Ind., on Baltimore & Ohio's Chicago Division: neatly trimmed rock ballast, well-kept jointed rail, bright semaphore blades catching the sun, and freshly painted Q-4 Mikado 4479 rolling a freight west.

Fascination for the '50s

There's plenty of valuable prototype information in *MODEL RAILROADER*'s latest special publication, *How to Model Railroads of the 1950s*, on sale now at newsstands, hobby shops, and www.KalmbachStore.com.



'Bloody Nose' is back: Historic liveries mark Amtrak's 40th

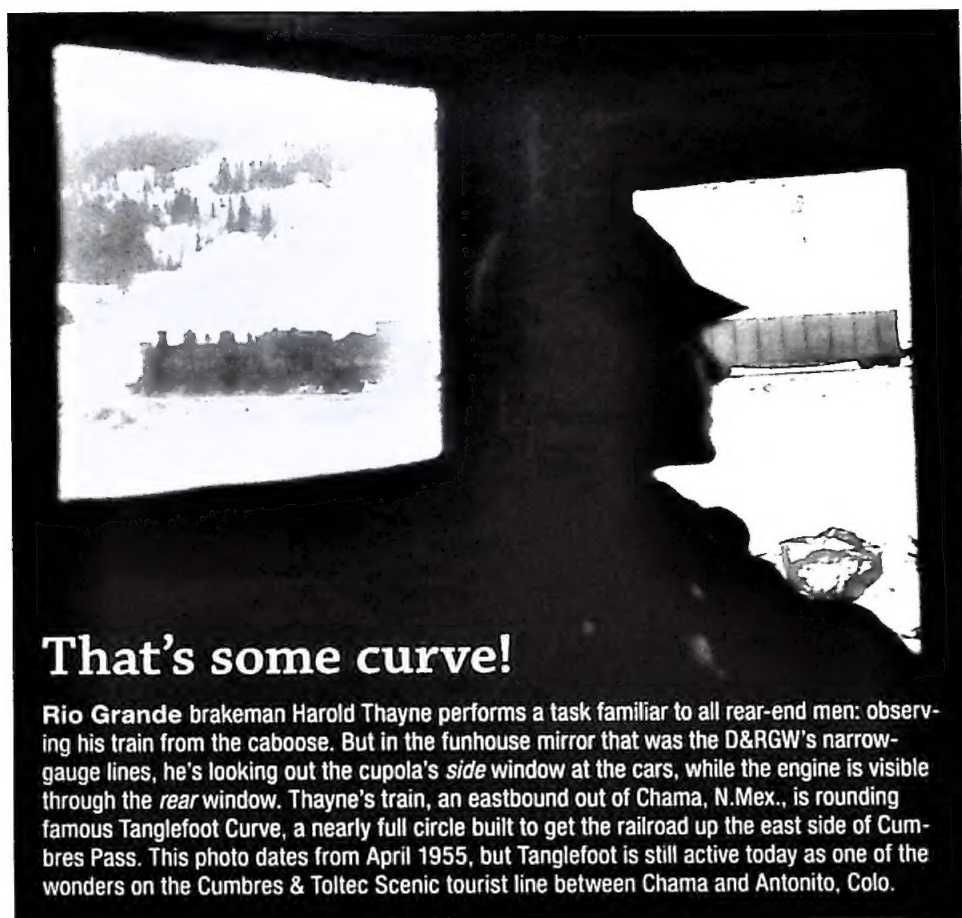
Classic Amtrak? Well, America's passenger railroad is 40 years old, and to mark the occasion the company is repainting five GE P42's in the major liveries worn by Amtrak locomotives over the years. Though applied only during 1972-75, the "Bloody Nose" is well remembered as Amtrak's first image. E's, F's, and all 150 SDP40F's (like 643, right) got it; now P42 156 (near Port Henry, N.Y., on March 20) flies the old flag.



David C. Warner



Kevin Burkholder



That's some curve!

Rio Grande brakeman Harold Thayne performs a task familiar to all rear-end men: observing his train from the caboose. But in the funhouse mirror that was the D&RGW's narrow-gauge lines, he's looking out the cupola's side window at the cars, while the engine is visible through the rear window. Thayne's train, an eastbound out of Chama, N.Mex., is rounding famous Tanglefoot Curve, a nearly full circle built to get the railroad up the east side of Cumbres Pass. This photo dates from April 1955, but Tanglefoot is still active today as one of the wonders on the Cumbres & Toltec Scenic tourist line between Chama and Antonito, Colo.

Philip R. Hastings

Obituaries

Jim Boyd

Influential photographer, author, and longtime editor of *Railfan* (now *Railfan & Railroad*) magazine Jim Boyd, 69, died of heart failure December 31 near his Middletown, N.J., home. The Dixon, Ill., native worked for EMD and IC before joining Carstens Publications, where he helped launch *Railfan* in 1975. After retirement from Carstens in '98, Boyd wrote, edited, and designed some 30 books. His one CLASSIC TRAINS article, "One Day at . . . New Lisbon, Wis.," appeared in Spring 2004.

Donald J. Krofta

Photographer and cinematographer Don Krofta, 85, died February 11 in Ohio. His superb 16mm films from the 1950s were the basis for 16 Herron Rail Video Programs.

Robert G. Lewis

Journalist, railroader, and railfan Bob Lewis died January 5 in Florida at age 94. A Philadelphian, he worked for PRR and B&LE before joining the Navy in 1941. In 1947 he began a 49-year career with Simmons-Boardman, publisher of *Railway Age* and other trade journals, rising to president. A cofounder of Philadelphia Chapter, NRHS, in 1936, Lewis was our "Great Photographer" in Summer 2001.

William W. Kratville

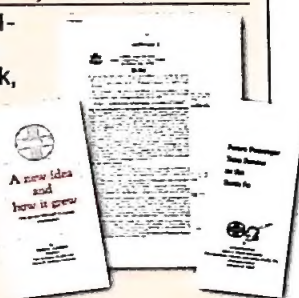
Railroader, author, and photographer Bill Kratville, 81, died March 14 in Omaha. His varied career included stints with Amtrak and UP. His Auto-Liner Corp. did passenger-car repair work. Kratville authored some 18 books, plus articles in STEAM GLORY and Fall '06 CT.

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The Amtrak Law, and more

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Photos: April 30 and Argent

See photos of the April 30, 1971, last runs of trains that died the night Amtrak was born. Plus, see more of Jim Shaughnessy's pictures of Argent Lumber Co.'s "Swamp Rat" steam locomotives.



The Way It Was

Railroaders and railfans share their adventures from the golden years of railroading. New stories are added twice a month.

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Bill Middleton: truly great

Publisher Kevin P. Keefe's tribute to William D. Middleton, "Writer with a Camera" [pages 22-33, Spring CLASSIC TRAINS], was indeed a great article about a great writer/photographer. I have loved Bill's many photos, articles, and books over the years. The commendation is well deserved.

Dan Heffner, Wickenburg, Ariz.

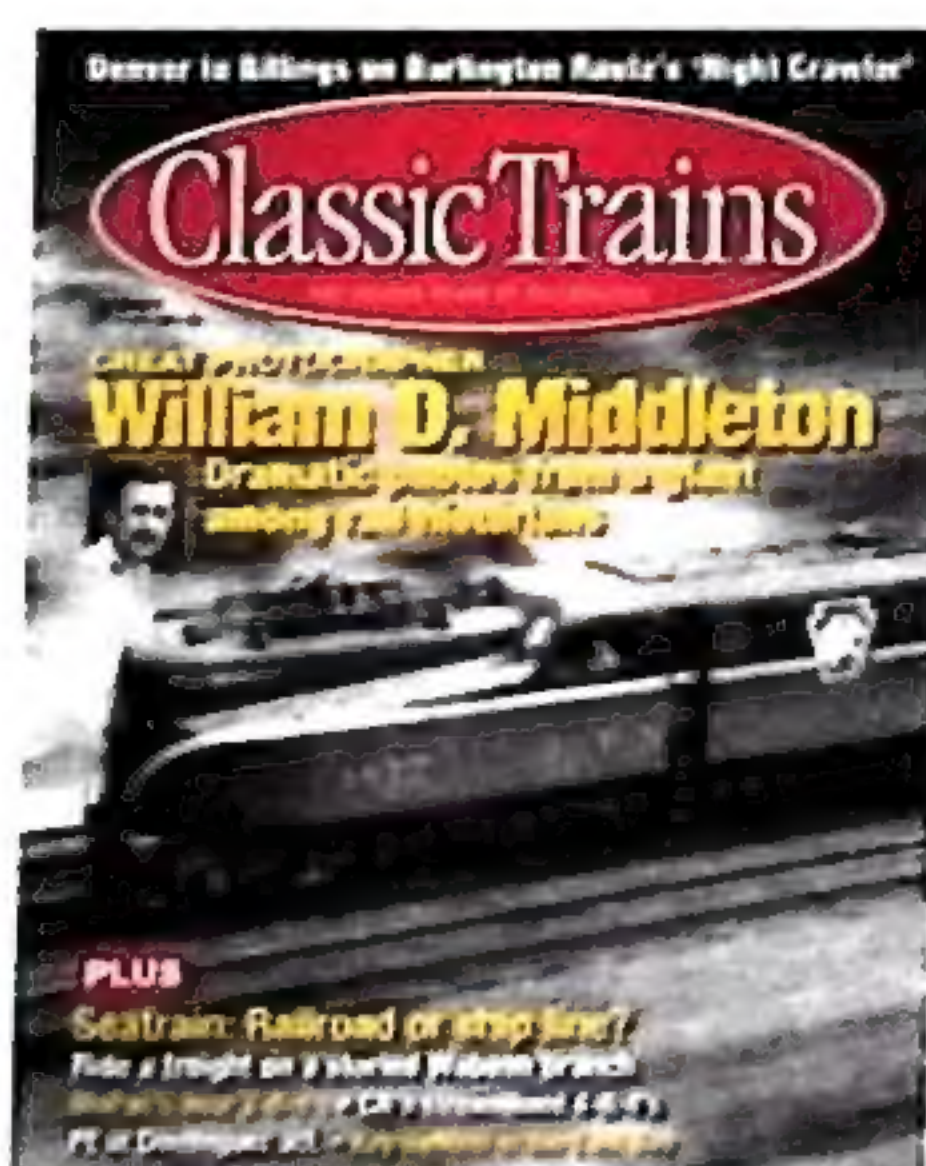
Bill Middleton's photo of Delaware & Hudson 4-6-6-4 No. 1510 [page 24] brought back memories of when I was 10 and would ride my bicycle near that exact location near Schenectady and watch freights doubleheaded with 4-6-6-4's and 4-8-4's, plus pushers on the westbounds. NYC's West Shore provided 2-8-2's and 4-8-2's; I even saw a Boston & Maine 0-6-0 headed back to Rotterdam Junction.

Jim Olberding, Ames, Iowa

Recalling Illinois' Hawkeye

I read with great interest J. David Ingles' "Riding the Hawkeye" [pages 46-54], for I was a Norfolk & Western trainmaster in Moberly, Mo., for three years starting in September 1973, and the Keokuk District he rode was part of my territory. By then the crew was based in the N&W yard office at Quincy, Ill., and two conductors remain vivid to me: Henry Roane and Leroy Sorrell. Most of the track was down to 10 mph. I remember seeing 56-lb. rail, rolled in England, still in place on a siding at either Versailles or Mount Sterling. The crew went on duty at Quincy Monday, Wednesday, and Friday and tied up at Keokuk, returning the next day.

I would rebut the claim [page 47] of the Northern Cross's Rogers "being the first locomotive to operate . . . west of the Allegheny Mountains and north of the Ohio River . . . on November 8, 1838." The Mad River & Lake Erie opened its first 15 miles, between Sandusky and Bellevue, Ohio, my hometown, on May 14, 1838, with the locomotive *Sandusky*, like the *Rogers* built by Rogers, Ketchum & Grosvenor Ma-



Robert Milner

The meet of A-B-A F7 set 1105 with westbound Mikado 2451 distracted from the 2-6-0 beyond.

chine Works of Paterson N.J. Moreover, the Erie & Kalamazoo had opened its line from Toledo, Ohio, to Adrian, Mich., with Baldwin locomotive *Adrian* in June 1837, which was joined in October 1837 by the *Toledo*.

Charlie Wise, Talbott, Tenn.

While driving from Galesburg, Ill., to St. Louis on February 28, 1952, as I crossed the Wabash tracks at Bluffs, Ill., I saw an eastbound freight with a

new three-unit F7 making a set-out [above] as a westbound, steam-powered freight pulled into town. I was so intent on getting the "meet" photo that I did not notice the 2-6-0 and its Keokuk train in the yard in the background. In fact, I didn't realize it was in the scene until I enlarged the negative many years later! Had I noticed it at the time, my appointment in

St. Louis could have waited.

Bob Milner, Hutchinson, Kans.

Dave Ingles was led down the garden path by the Wabash historians on the Moguls' history ["The Keokuk Line's 15 Minutes of Fame," pages 55-57]. According to the Wabash roster in the R&LHS's *Railroad History No. 133*, on

page 68, Rhode Island built the one preserved at St. Louis' Museum of Transportation (as No. 573), as No. 754 in November 1899, with builder number 3147. Built as a compound, it was later rebuilt to simple. The five 2-6-0's discussed in the article were in classes F-4 and F-5, with 573 being one of four F-5's, three by RI and one by Richmond. The F-4's were built by Rhode Island, Richmond, and Baldwin. Nos. 569 and 587, among those mentioned, were also Rhode Island products, not Richmond.

Ron Goldfeder, Creve Coeur, Mo.

About Rock Island's "T-Bone Special"

In the amusing "BL2's and Pullmans to the Stock Yards," in "The Way It Was" [page 81], Ben F. Anthony wrote of a stock train on the Rock Island, whose consist included several Pullman cars, which arrived in Chicago after originating in western Iowa.

There is more to the story.

In the 1950s, cattlemen from around Audubon, Iowa, indeed were shipping premium beef cattle to the Chicago stock yards. Audubon was at the end of a branch line that joined the main line at Atlantic. At one time the Chicago & North Western also had a branch line, from Carroll on the main line south to Audubon, where each railroad had its own turntable. By the late '50s, C&NW had ceased running into Audubon.

During that period, cattlemen suggested an Audubon banker should ride with them on the stock train to Chicago. Normally, that would have meant riding in a drafty, cold, and rough drover's caboose. The banker demurred, saying he would only go along if he could ride in a Pullman. So somehow, the Rock Island agreed to provide the stock cars to ship the cattle and also Pullmans to carry the cattlemen and the banker. The result came to be known as the "T-Bone Special."

On one occasion, perhaps the first one, 51 stock cars were loaded with cattle at Audubon and moved down the branch to Atlantic, where six passenger cars, including a diner-lounge and Pullmans, were attached behind the locomotives and in front of the stock cars. The trains ran as a special overnight to Chicago, and the passengers returned to Atlantic on a regularly scheduled Rock Island passenger train. These "T-Bone Specials" continued into the 1960s, when the increasing use of trucks to move cattle hastened the closure of the Chicago stock yards. Nevertheless, the memory lives on in Audubon with an annual celebration and a bigger-than-life-size statute of a beef animal at the town's park and campground. The branch line's roadbed, without track since the 1990s, survives as a recreation trail for most of its length south and west of Audubon.

Lawrence J. Lystig, Peachtree City, Ga.

Like author Ben Anthony, I too was a Rock Island trainee in November 1956, and in the early '60s, after my armed forces stint, Blue Island was my base as assistant trainmaster. Plus, if I remember right, Ben was my predecessor as the Trainee/Chairman in the Assistant Division Engineer's office in Fort Worth, Texas.

C. Arden "Art" Mennell, St. Louis, Mo.

Railroad or steamship line?

Thank you for Robert E. Mohowski's wonderful "Seatrains: Railroad or Steamship Line?" [pages 64-73]. It was interesting and well-researched. In summer 1962, through the courtesy of the Seafarers International Union, I sailed *Seatrains Savannah* on four trips from Edgewater, N.J., to Texas City,

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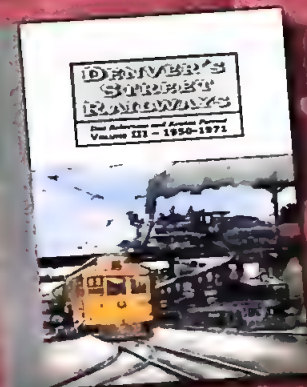
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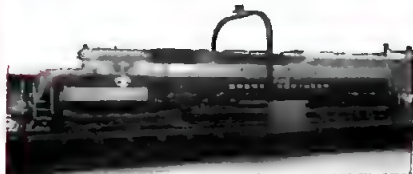
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Texas, as one of the two crew mess men. It was my second summer at sea, the first being on Cities Service's tanker *Royal Oak*, as an engineroom wiper.

There was a world of difference between them, and the tanker duty was much preferred. Its mess deck was open to a view of the sea, but the crew mess on *Seatrain* was inboard (and the only space aboard I know of that was air-conditioned). For me, both summers were a great experience and made me somewhat of a "salt" when I went into the U.S. Navy. As to whether *Seatrain* was a railroad or steamship line, since the ships could carry the railcars (or anything else), but the cars could not carry the ship, I say a steamship line.

Roger H. Norris, Marlton, N.J.

Bob Mohowski's article was an excellent look at a phase of railroading unknown to most of today's readers and forgotten by nearly everyone else. In the late 1950s, I was a foreign sales representative for the Pennsylvania Railroad, and while we concentrated on overseas traffic, our department was charged with soliciting all steamship business. To say that coastal water carriers such as *Seatrain* were not always "friendly" connections would be an understatement. Although Pennsy was primarily an east-west railroad, we handled tonnage through gateways such as Potomac Yard and Cincinnati, so to us, *Seatrain* was a poacher of all-rail traffic.

Frank G. Tatnall, Radnor, Pa.

On October 29, 1960, *Seatrain Georgia* and Lackawanna's passenger ferry *Chatham* collided in New York Harbor. There was no loss of life. My future mother-in-law was a passenger on the *Chatham* (the former *Erie Youngstown*), which was scrapped as a result.

Fred Hunt, Millington, N.J.

I enjoyed the article immensely; it is an appropriate rail topic and was wonderfully written. I'd propose, however, that the answer to the question of whether *Seatrain* was a railroad or a steamship line would be neither—to me, it operated carferries. I base this on a statement in January 1975 *TRAINS* by author/historian George W. Hilton, who wrote about carferries being as inter-

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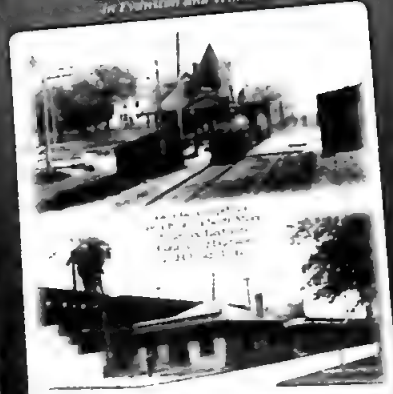
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esting as anything in life, squared.

One statement I found curious was that *Seatrain New York* and *Seatrain Havana* were the first American cargo ships launched after World War I. Does this refer to saltwater ships? In my Great Lakes library, I found in one book six examples of bulk carriers built during 1918-1932 in Great Lakes shipyards; also, railroads added nine carferries.

Darren Struble, Ludington, Mich.

¶ *The reference indeed was to saltwater ships.—R.S.M.*

Night Crawling on the Q

Stan Rhine's "Burlington's Night Crawler" [pages 34-40] brought back some memories. In the 1950s and '60s, I rode it several times, variously getting on or off at Denver, Boulder, Loveland, Cheyenne, Casper, and Billings. The crew and I ate lunch at Worland, Wyo., exactly as described and pictured.

W. Bruce Haslam, Ogden, Utah

I would occasionally ride the Night Crawler in the early '60s between Denver and Fort Collins, and I vividly recall one time having to argue with a ticket clerk in Denver Union Station about whether I could buy a seat in a roomette, at the day rate, for that trip or not. He insisted "No," and I insisted he consult his rate book. I was vindicated and rode in style the three or so interminable hours up to Fort Collins.

R. Michael Darrow, Denver, Colo.

In August 1967, just weeks before the end, we rode No. 30 from Billings to Cheyenne as part of a circle trip from home. In the later years, at least, the consist that arrived in Billings as No. 43 from Omaha would go on to Denver as No. 30 the next day, and vice versa, saving having to turn the trains in Billings. On our trip, this meant we were stuck in the same old Colorado & Southern coach, with non-reclining seats, for two days and most of two nights!

On another topic, CB&Q motor No. 9735, pictured at Macomb, Ill., in January 1967 [page 53], would make the last run of the Keweenaw Central tourist line in Upper Michigan on October 10, 1971, as pictured in May 1972 *TRAINS*.

Michael M. Bartels, Lincoln, Nebr.

"Railroad Life" a true story

John P. Hankey's story, "The Railroad Life," which leads off your special edition, *WORKING ON THE RAILROAD* [pages 8-13], is the best and most accurate article about railroaders' lives I have read. I agree with everything he wrote; I put in 42 years in train service on the Chicago & North Western and Union Pacific.

James H. Yanke, Kewaskum, Wis.

The quote on page 9, "Older railroaders have a point when they say of today's industry, 'It isn't fun anymore,'" caught my attention. I have been on the railroad 13 years, and this statement couldn't be more true. I have had the pleasure of working with many prior-rights railroaders, and this statement came out of their mouths on a daily basis. The bosses who came up through the ranks have forgotten where they came from, and the ones who didn't do not have a clue as to what is going on.

*Frank Benson II
Milmay, N.J.*

Dispatcher doing

Dan Sabin's "Titanic Decisions" [pages 68-77] on train dispatching for the Rock Island may be the best I've read on the subject. His account of First 724 meeting 39 at Mounds, Ark., made my own stomach do a flip. It's easy to imagine how ominous "Dispatcher, Mounds" must have sounded. The cover-up makes a good laugh.

I like his caution on the possible origins of "OS." Another possibility is "Order Station," which I found in *Ma Kiley: The Life of a Railroad Telegrapher*, by Thomas C. Jepsen. That term has a formality that could have come from addressing the need to distinguish messages about train movements from other telegraph wire activity. By contrast, "on sheet" sounds like a colloquialism. I'd like to see a definitive answer.

Jerry Dziedzic, Breckenridge, Colo.

Dan Sabin's article is interesting, but there is an error in the Memphis photo caption on page 73. The RI freight is passing the Broadway cabin whose IC employee controlled the crossing (by means of a highway-style traffic light). It isn't Kentucky Street, which is a one-story white building barely visible about a dozen cars back in the train between the RI and MoPac tracks. That is where photographer Steve Forrest worked.

Mike Condren, Tahlequah, Okla.

This was a very enjoyable article. When I worked Kentucky Street, the Rock Island dispatchers in El Reno were always very professional, among the best dispatchers I've ever known. I now dispatch for Norfolk Southern in Knoxville, Tenn.

Steve Forrest, Blaine, Tenn.

Knowledge from history

I thoroughly enjoyed the issue—kudos to all the authors. It is only through the efforts of people like these authors in *WORKING ON THE RAILROAD* that we know as much as we do.

I just have one nit to pick, in Karl Zimmermann's well-done "Sues, Stews, and Zephyrettes" [pages 34-43], where on

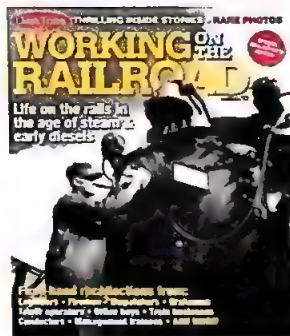
page 37 he refers to the Gulf, Mobile & Northern's ACF-built *Rebels* as being articulated. They were not. I was born in 1935 and grew up in New England, and so I never knew of the *Rebels* until I read an article on them in *TRAINS*, now many years ago.

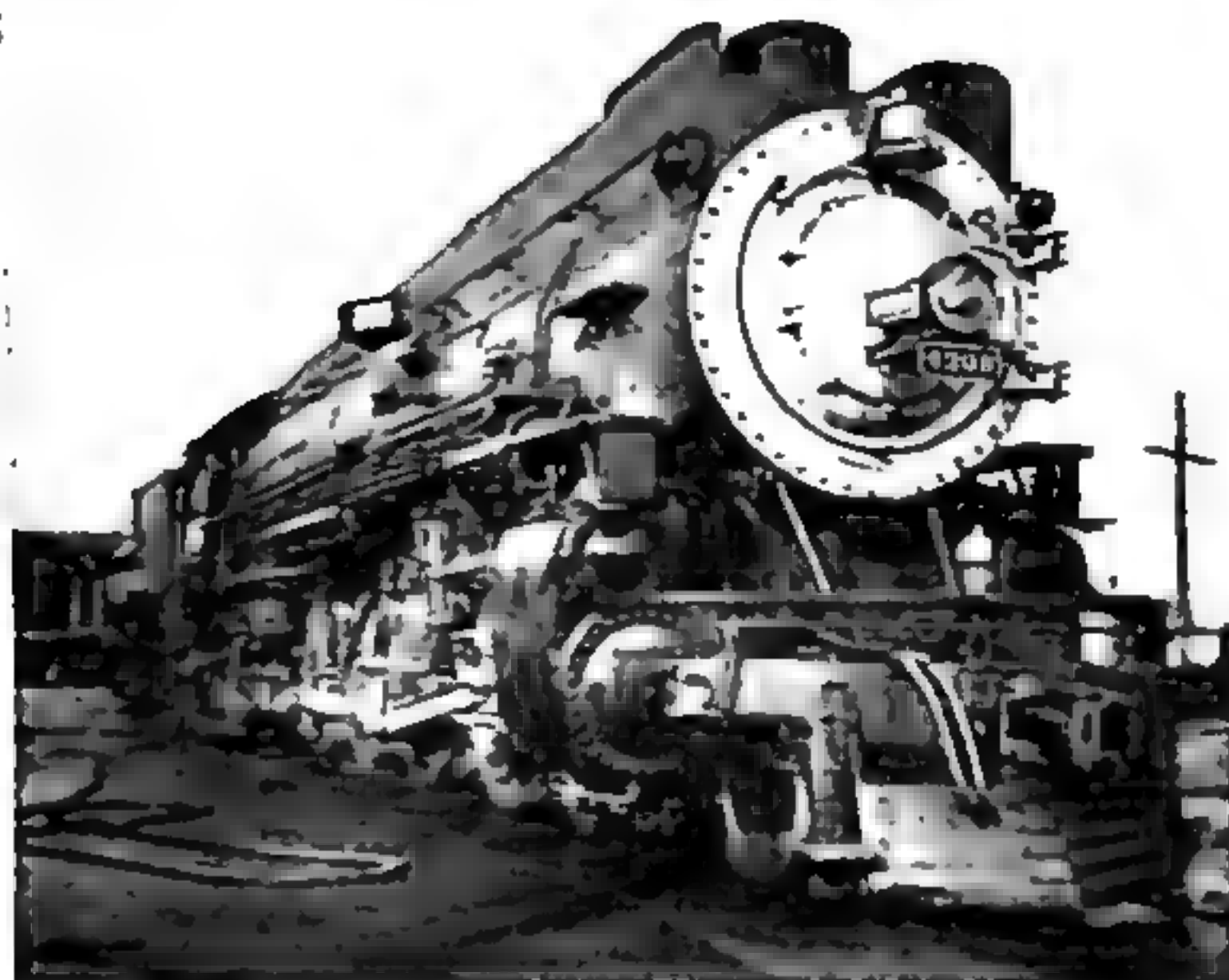
Ralph E. Zeiba, Kent, Wash.

Getting a warm feeling

I read this special edition while "Amtrak-ing" back home from Baltimore, in the snow, which made it even more special thinking of all the men and women who stepped up working those many hard days and nights on our nation's railroads, especially during World War II.

Ron Hash, Bethania, N.C.





Alden Armstrong collection

SP 4-8-2 4300 shows off its skyline casing.

Mystery solved—it was Macomb

Dave Ingles' photo of CB&Q motor car 9735 on page 53 in his "Serendipity on the Burlington Route" answered an old question for me. Driving east from California in 1965, I came across the

unit but had not been able to recall where it was, as I didn't make a note of the location at the time.

Bob Mohowski, Saratoga Springs, N.Y.

Scientifically streamlining steam

I enjoyed Jim Shaughnessy's "Scientific Streamlining" [pages 60-63], on Canadian National's U-4 4-8-4's; his photos are always wonderful. Another successful scientific streamlining effort occurred on Southern Pacific, which added skyline casings to other engines besides the famous *Daylight* 4-8-4's. All 4-8-2's, starting with No. 4315 in 1939, received this treatment, as well as most of the P-10 4-6-2's. None of the Mountain types received skirting, although some did get *Daylight* paint from the tender to the cab. Three P-10's got the whole *Daylight* treatment, skirts and all, for the 1941 *San Joaquin Daylight*.

Alden Armstrong, Grand Junction, Colo.

Spring cleanup

- Page 41: The replica H&StJ RPO is at the Patee House Museum in St. Joseph, Mo., and a sixth "Q" heavyweight baggage-RPO, No. 1942, is at the Museum of Transportation in St. Louis.
- Page 47: The Illinois River flows into the Mississippi River at Grafton, Ill., near (not at) Alton.
- Page 62: CN 6403 is not approaching Toronto Union Station from Niagara Falls, but leaving Toronto westward.
- Page 70: CofG reached Seatrain's Savannah dock on its own track, not S&A's.
- Pages 70-71: Puerto Rico was and is a U.S. territory, not a sovereign nation.
- Page 86: The review of the DVD *West Side: Slim Gauge Logging in Tuolumne County* had the wrong phone number for Catenary Video in Harriman, N.Y. The correct number is (800) 343-5540.
- Page 89: Pullman *Loblolly Pine* was owned by Chicago & Eastern Illinois. **1**

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Robert Milner photo



True Color

Little red waycar

Bringing a splash of color to the little Burlington Route crossroads town of Alpha, Ill., on a fine May 1962 day is car 14539, freshly painted in the bright Chinese red the road adopted in 1959. The waycar, as cabooses were known on the CB&Q, is trailing a local freight on the line between Galesburg and Barstow, Ill., just east of the Quad Cities; the line it's crossing is a Q branch that once ran from Galva west to New Boston, on the Illinois River, but had been cut to just Alpha-Joy by this time. The wooden waycar is a class NE4, built way back in 1883, a few NE4s survived to get Burlington Northern green paint, but not 14539, which was scrapped in 1967.

Richard J. Anderson





The colorful, fast Seaboard Air Line

Passengers came first, but named freights revealed SAL's marketing acumen



Jim McClellan

On SAL's *Silver Meteor*, crossing the Trout River approaching Jacksonville, Fla., in 1964, coaches and a tavern-observation brought up the rear.

The Seaboard Air Line Railroad's beginnings date to 1832, when the Portsmouth & Roanoke was chartered to build from Portsmouth, Va., to Weldon, N.C. Opened in 1834, the line was to compete with the Petersburg Railroad, Atlantic Coast Line's earliest predecessor, which ran to Weldon from Petersburg, Va. The companies' backers saw great potential to link the North with the South's bountiful agricultural and forest products and with its slowly but steadily developing potential for industry. P&R became the Seaboard & Roanoke, which—after the setbacks of the Civil War—began acquiring other lines and building trackage further into the Carolinas. The S&R and its associated roads began calling themselves the Seaboard Air Line system, and by 1895 had reached Atlanta, Ga.

The "Air Line" name was often used by railroads of the period to denote a route supposedly "as straight as the crow flies." It was a reasonably direct run from Portsmouth to Weldon, but the Air Line label would be more than hype when in the 1880s Seaboard acquired a line linking Hamlet and Wilmington, N.C., which included a 79-mile tangent track, longest in the U.S. (and still run by CSX). Moreover, Seaboard tried to start a real airline, Seaboard Airways, in the early 1940s, but the Civil Aeronautics Board denied it.

As the 19th century closed, the SAL system came under control of a group led by John Skelton Williams, who added a line from Richmond, Va., to Weldon, and acquired the Florida Central & Peninsular, transforming what had

been a Portsmouth–Atlanta carrier into a north-south line. In 1900, the various SAL roads were incorporated as Seaboard Air Line Railway. Thus was the core route structure in place, with its coastal main line from Richmond going through Raleigh, Columbia, and Savannah to Jacksonville and Tampa.

Other important lines ran from Monroe to Rutherfordton, N.C. (which later connected to the Clinchfield); from Savannah west to Montgomery, Ala.; and from Jacksonville to Chattahoochee, Fla., and a connection with Louisville & Nashville on to Mobile, Ala., and New Orleans. The early route map was completed by branches in the Carolinas and Florida. Seaboard also controlled the Baltimore Steam Packet Co., known as the Old Bay Line, which operated in the Chesapeake Bay area until 1962.

The Atlanta line was extended to Birmingham in 1904, adding traffic and securing its place as second-busiest after the north-south main. Hamlet, as the axis for SAL's east-west and north-south traffic patterns, was the site of a large yard and shops; its iconic passenger station stands today as a railroad museum and Amtrak stop. Other key shops were at Portsmouth, Savannah, Jacksonville ["Bird's-Eye View," Spring 2011 CLASSIC TRAINS], and Tampa.

Seaboard emphasized passenger service from its earliest days. Old lithographs show the *Atlanta Special*, linking that city and Washington, D.C. (via the RF&P north of Richmond, of course), with the label "76 miles in 67 minutes" highlighting a particularly fast segment of its run. As soon as SAL expanded to

Florida, it promoted travel there via such trains as the *Florida-Cuba Special* and the seasonal *Seaboard Florida Limited*, both forwarded to Miami over the Florida East Coast. Early freights often carried produce from Florida as well as phosphate rock mined from the "Bone Valley" area near Tampa.

Further expansion

SAL continued to expand, in 1917 adding a low-grade freight line between Hamlet and Savannah via Charleston, S.C. A fresh burst of construction and acquisitions in the 1920s added significant mileage, notably through south central Florida to Miami in 1927. This allowed SAL to claim itself the only railroad serving both Florida coasts and ended its dependence on FEC. In 1925, SAL leased the Charlotte Harbor & Northern, an important phosphate hauler on Florida's west coast. In 1928, Seaboard acquired the Georgia, Florida & Alabama, opening a shortcut from Florida to the Montgomery line to speed important freight connections to the Midwest. SAL also controlled short lines including the 92-mile Macon, Dublin & Savannah in Georgia and the 35-mile Tavares & Gulf in Florida.

The Miami extension was accompanied by inauguration of the *Orange Blossom Special*, an all-Pullman, winter-only luxury flyer that soon gained national fame. Seaboard spared no expense in publicizing the elegant train, advertising it on boxcars, and the "Blossom" even had a popular bluegrass song written about it in the late '30s. The Blossom was a fitting symbol of

Seaboard's early fortunes, but the good times didn't last. The debt load from all the decade's enthusiastic expansion couldn't withstand the collapse of the Florida boom and the onset of the Depression, and SAL was forced into bankruptcy in 1930.

Although the '30s were lean times, SAL's receivers believed attractive investments might be just what it needed to bring back business. The railroad's interest in streamlining and diesels led to semi-streamlined rail motor cars and semi-lightweight "American Flyer" coaches in the mid-1930s and to Electro-Motive E4's for the *Orange Blossom Special* in December '38. Three months later Seaboard unveiled a new lightweight streamliner, the seven-car New York-Miami *Silver Meteor*. It was an immediate sensation, and SAL quickly went back to EMD and Budd for more equipment; by 1941, the railroad was running daily 14-car trains to both Miami and Tampa/St. Petersburg.

While the war years strained SAL's resources—and inflicted several deadly wrecks on its single-track route—the railroad shouldered the load with new EMD FT's, secondhand steam engines from Western Maryland and Chicago & North Western, and installation of block signals and centralized traffic control over large portions of its main line. Wartime income helped the carrier emerge from receivership in August 1946 as Seaboard Air Line Railroad.

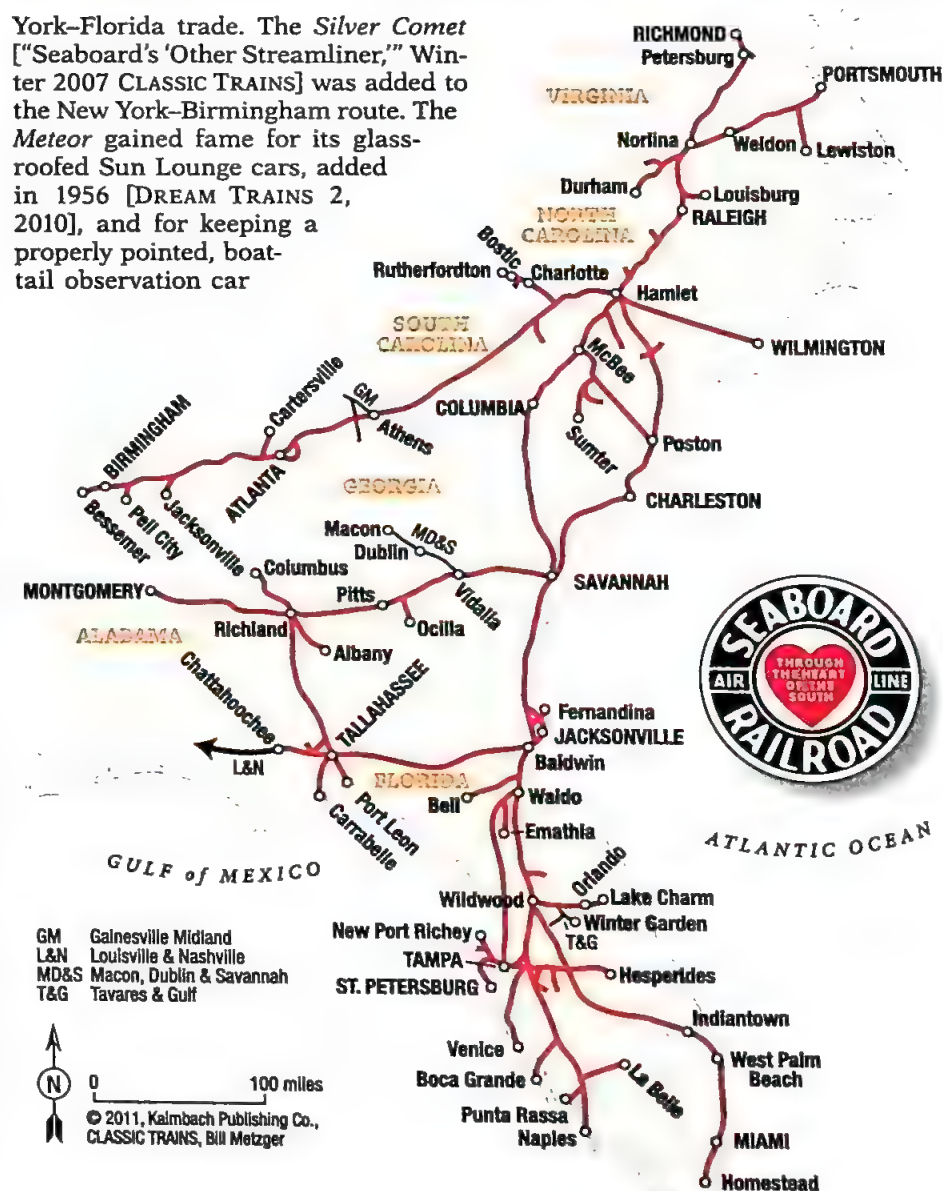
The high-profile wrecks, many involving passenger trains, spurred quick postwar completion of the signaling and modernization campaign. SAL's earliest CTC installation—the first in the Southeast—had started south from Richmond in late 1941. By the early '50s, signals covered most mainline mileage, keeping the operation fluid and competitive with its double-tracked neighbor ACL. Seaboard even considered cab signaling briefly in the late '40s but never implemented it.

In the postwar traffic glow, Seaboard rapidly added more streamlined cars from Budd in 1947 and lightweight sleepers from several builders beginning in '49. The *Silver Star* name was given to what had been a second section of the *Meteor*, and the two "Silver Fleet" members held down the first-class New



W. B. Cox, Krambles-Peterson Archive

Seaboard's E units, FT's, and Baldwin cabs wore this early "citrus" scheme, displayed by E7 3036 in March 1952 as the northbound *Silver Meteor* loads passengers at St. Petersburg, Fla.



Fallen Flags Remembered



G. W. Pettingill, courtesy Larry Goolsby

Note the "flagship" blurb on the water tank at Wildwood, Fla., a train that 1925 Baldwin M-2 class Mountain type 261 often pulled. SAL rebuilt her with a feedwater heater and new tender.



Jim McClellan

SAL's diesel color variety is evident in this 1959 lineup at Richmond, Va. This off-white (really green) replaced the E8's citrus colors; the GP7 is in freight livery and Baldwin the yard scheme.

on the rear throughout the train's pre-Amtrak existence. Seaboard continued to maintain its premier trains to high standards into the '60s, proudly calling itself "The Route of Courteous Service." The *Meteor* and *Star* names survive on Amtrak's New York-Miami route.

Variety in locomotives

Postwar modernization also came fast to SAL's engine fleet, dominated by steam into the late '40s. After the 1938-41 E-unit purchases, Seaboard sampled switchers from EMD, Alco, and Baldwin, and also tried exotic Baldwin road units, including 14 big "Centipedes" for freight and 3 "baby-face" DR6-4-1500's for light passenger runs. SAL's early road diesels wore the colorful "citrus" livery of green, yellow, and orange, in

later years supplanted by more utilitarian green-based liveries. Seaboard always maintained a separate red-and-black scheme for diesel switchers.

Seaboard's steam roster had several distinctive classes. More than 100 Q-3 Mikados, easily spotted by their face full of air pumps, formed the backbone of the freight fleet. Far sleeker were the M-2 Mountains, which pulled the top passenger runs from their delivery in 1924-26 until the E units took over.

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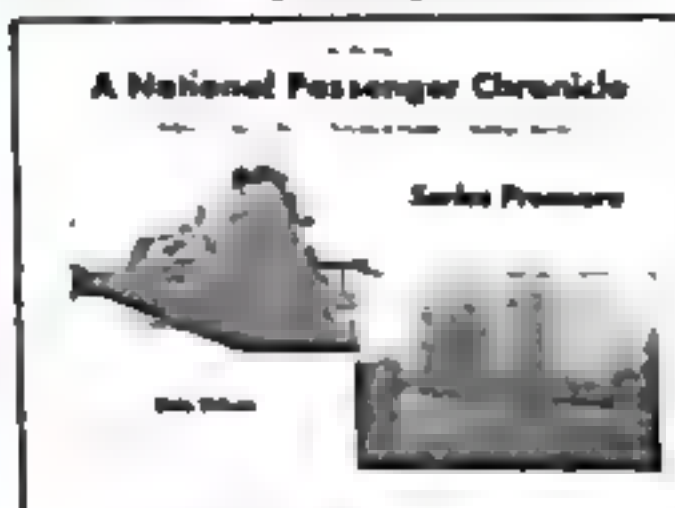
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Fallen Flags Remembered



G. W. Pettingill, courtesy Larry Goolsby

Note the "flagship" blurb on the water tank at Wildwood, Fla., a train that 1925 Baldwin M-2 class Mountain type 261 often pulled. SAL rebuilt her with a feedwater heater and new tender.



Jim McClellan

SAL's diesel color variety is evident in this 1959 lineup at Richmond, Va. This off-white (really green) replaced the E8's citrus colors; the GP7 is in freight livery and Baldwin the yard scheme.

on the rear throughout the train's pre-Amtrak existence. Seaboard continued to maintain its premier trains to high standards into the '60s, proudly calling itself "The Route of Courteous Service." The *Meteor* and *Star* names survive on Amtrak's New York-Miami route.

Variety in locomotives

Postwar modernization also came fast to SAL's engine fleet, dominated by steam into the late '40s. After the 1938-41 E-unit purchases, Seaboard sampled switchers from EMD, Alco, and Baldwin, and also tried exotic Baldwin road units, including 14 big "Centipedes" for freight and 3 "baby-face" DR6-4-1500's for light passenger runs. SAL's early road diesels wore the colorful "citrus" livery of green, yellow, and orange, in

later years supplanted by more utilitarian green-based liveries. Seaboard always maintained a separate red-and-black scheme for diesel switchers.

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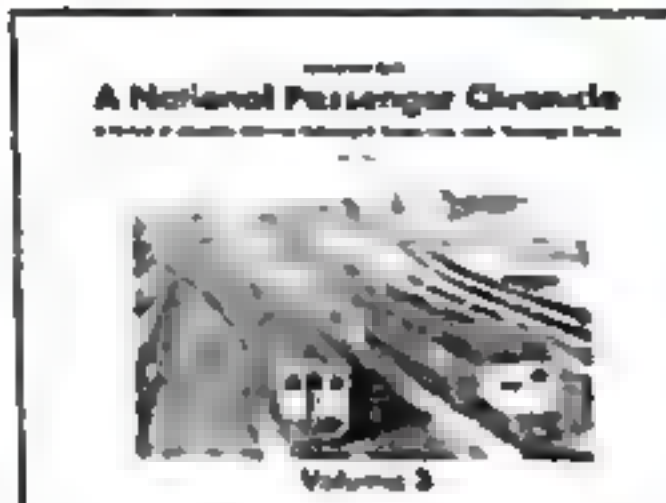
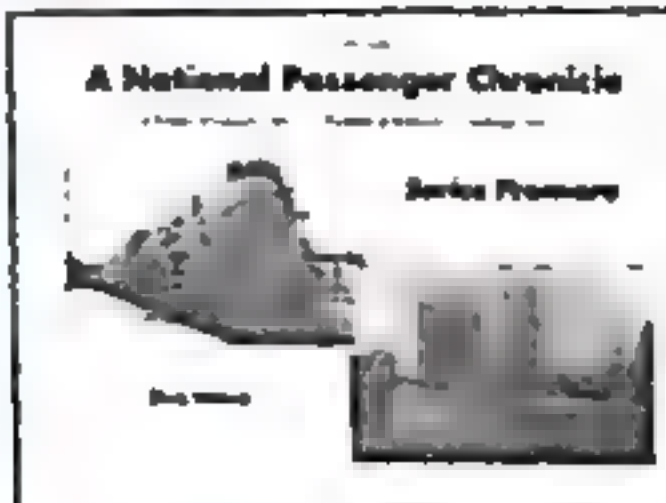
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The road to rescue



A BAD STATES Penn Central train 427, the Boston-Albany remnant of NYC's all-Pullman *New England States* to Chicago, trundles west at Riverside, Mass., on April 11, 1970. PC's bankruptcy two months later prompted the creation of Amtrak the following year.

In the 1960s, the passenger train was in a death spiral, and dragging the nation's largest railroad down with it. Outside the Northeast, the public had largely deserted the trains, but wasn't ready to see them die. The government-sponsored solution—Amtrak—was a product of cold economics, romantic sentiment, calculated deceit, and enlightened leadership

By Don Phillips

Millions of Senate speeches have been given over the years and, thankfully, have been quickly forgotten. But on May 20, 1962, Sen. Claiborne Pell (Dem., Rhode Island) gave a speech that now, almost 50 years later, is remembered as the first effective call to arms for a revolution in passenger rail. Pell's words have echoed over the years as the "Megalopolis" speech.

The speech did little by itself, but it lit a fuse. As the years went on, Presidents John F. Kennedy, Lyndon Johnson, and even Richard Nixon adopted (or in Nixon's case, tolerated) Pell's firm belief that passenger rail was the answer to the Northeast's mobility problems. Pell's speech and his 1966 book, *Megalopolis Unbound*, although not a barn-burner of a read, helped lead to his dream of fast Boston-Washington trains. His dream even spread to the rest of the country, which wanted to keep its own trains.

"The answer is to divide the railroad system into a public authority that would carry passengers while the existing private companies would continue their more profitable function of hauling freight," said Pell, who died at age 90 in 2009 after serving six Senate terms (1961-97). That sentence sounds suspiciously like Amtrak, which came into being on May 1, 1971, almost exactly nine years after Pell's speech.

An amazing series of things came together in just the correct order to save passenger railroading, and eventually to strengthen the freight railroad system, too. In fact, as the months progressed, the development of a government-sponsored passenger corporation became more of a way to prevent nationalization of freight railroading than to save the passenger train. If the passenger-train burden could be removed, perhaps the freight railroads—particularly Penn Central, the troubled behemoth



CLASSIC TRAINS collection

VISIONARY Sen. Claiborne Pell called for a public passenger-train authority in 1962.

moth of the Northeast—could avoid the disaster of nationalization.

The phantom 'glory years'

But first, let's go back to the mid-1950s. Despite spending millions after World War II on new streamliners, railroads failed to overcome the appeal of the automobile and the airplane. Costs were rising and the passenger count was declining. Managements were unhappy. Unions fought to keep their jobs. The Interstate Commerce Commission blocked as many train discontinuances as possible, and communities fought to keep their trains even if they didn't ride them. Things grew worse day by day.

During the 1960s, more than a dozen Class 1 railroads managed to exit the intercity passenger-train business [see

box, page 28]. At the opposite end of the spectrum, almost as many attempted to maintain a high level of service, including the Santa Fe, Union Pacific, Great Northern, Northern Pacific, Burlington, Illinois Central, B&O/C&O, Atlantic Coast Line, and Seaboard. Other Class 1's worked hard to kill trains, notably New York Central, Pennsylvania, Southern Pacific, and Missouri Pacific. NYC even removed two Buffalo-Detroit runs from its timetables and denied they existed even though it was forced to run them. SP was famous for killing dining cars on the *Sunset Limited* in favor of an "automat" vending-machine car.

Some roads that otherwise had a sterling reputation for passenger service could be nasty about killing trains, resorting to legal but decidedly customer-unfriendly tactics. One was "a train to nowhere," wherein railroads would get approval for a train-off from one state but not an adjacent state. The maneuver: end the service at the town nearest the state line. Southern Railway, which ran a handful of trains with class, offers a good example with its Augusta, Ga.-Charlotte, N.C., train. North Carolina and Georgia gave permission to drop it, but South Carolina, home to 95 percent of the route, did not. So Southern cut the train back to a Warrenton-Fort Mill, S.C., stub run. Naturally, no one rode this, so South Carolina was forced to give in.

Another approach was to stop a train in the middle of its run, as soon as the ICC train-off approval was released. On January 9, 1969, Louisville & Nashville stopped Cincinnati-New Orleans train 7, the *Humming Bird*, at Birmingham, Ala., 421 miles short of its destination, and put the 14 passengers on board onto a chartered bus. Editorialized the *Louisville Courier-Journal*, "[Railroads] seem to prefer making their customers angry." At least the *Bird* "landed" in a big city on its last flight. Eight months





Don Helmburger collection

DREAM TRAINS Railroads spent lavishly on streamliners in the mid- and late 1940s, hoping that World War II passenger traffic levels—and profits—might carry over to the postwar era. This artwork promoted the Rock Island-SP *Golden Rocket*—a train that, tellingly, never ran.

later, Burlington Route reaped a load of bad publicity when on August 14 it halted its 896-mile Omaha-Billings, Mont., coach-only train 41 at tiny Hemingford, Nebr., in the middle of its run. After a few hours' wait, passengers were bused on to their destinations, but unfortunately for CB&Q, Rep. Glenn Cunning-

ham, a member of the House Commerce Committee, was among the few riders on board, and the Burlington took a political beating. One result: the ICC required railroads to give the public 48 hours notice of discontinuance.

Using the Interstate Commerce Commission's numbers for "solely re-

lated" costs—covering only expenses that were clearly passenger-train-related—intercity passenger trains actually made a "profit" until after World War II. In wartime 1944, in fact, railroads made a little over \$1 billion using this method, a truly huge sum in those days. Using "solely related and apportioned"

The passenger train's plight

Passenger-miles by mode, in billions, for selected years, 1923–1970

Year	Inter-city rail	Commuter rail	All rail	Auto	Bus	Air
1923	31.6	6.4	38.0	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.
1929	24.2	6.9	31.1	198	n.a.	n.a.
1936	19.8	4.0	23.8	249	n.a.	n.a.
1941	25.3	4.1	29.4	324	13.5	1.7
1944	90.2	5.3	95.5	181	27.3	2.9
1955	23.7	4.8	28.5	637	21.9	21.3
1967	10.9	4.3	15.2	890	24.9	80.2
1970	6.2	4.6	10.8	1,026	25.3	109.5

Passenger profits (or losses) on U.S. railroads, in millions of dollars

Year	Solely related costs	Solely related and apportioned costs
1923	n.a.	266
1929	n.a.	128
1936	51	(233)
1941	74	(226)
1944	1,036	234
1955	(85)	(637)
1967	(138)	(460)
1970	n.a.	(450)



costs—the ICC's estimate of what a passenger train should pay for costs common to passenger and freight services—the picture was considerably worse. Yes, there were still profits in World War II, but they were smaller. In 1944, for example, the profit using this method was \$234 million, and hefty losses smeared every non-war year from 1933 to 1970, the last before Amtrak.

The debate heated up with the famous "Hosmer Report" of 1958. ICC Examiner Howard Hosmer basically concluded that the ICC passenger abandonment procedure no longer made sense. It was irrelevant, he said, to allocate passenger costs, because passenger service had long ceased to cover its variable costs. Air and road competition were the root cause of the decline of the passenger train, Hosmer said, and the passenger deficit could never be reduced by increasing fares or cutting costs. The bottom line seemed to be that saving the passenger train was a hopeless task. Passenger trains would be gone by 1970, Hosmer forecast.

"For more than a century, the railroad passenger coach has occupied an interesting and useful place in American life," Hosmer wrote. "But at the present time the inescapable fact—and certainly to many people an unpleasant one—seems to be that in a decade this time-honored vehicle may take its place in the transportation museum along with the stagecoach, the sidewheeler, and the steam locomotive."

The next year, *TRAINS* magazine published one of its most-remembered issues, with the cover blurb "Who Shot the Passenger Train?" Editor David P. Morgan's analysis in that April 1959 edition was one of the most thorough independent examinations of the problem, and quite accurate and prescient. "The passenger train is not dying of old age," he wrote. "It was shot in the back."

"Ironically, most of the people who



Wayne Leeman

MAIL MONEY As passengers deserted the trains, mail became an increasingly important revenue source—until the Post Office Department pulled most mail off the trains in 1967. Nine years before that, workers load MoPac Railway Post Office cars at St. Louis Union Station.

want the trains are strangling them," he continued. "Not deliberately, not in collusion. Nevertheless, that is what they are doing."

Morgan concluded: "Man has yet to invent an overland passenger mode of transport with the train's unique combination of speed, safety, comfort, dependability, and economy. Yet the passenger train is a museum candidate today. Its native profitability had been frustrated by archaic regulation, obsolete labor contracts, unequal taxation, and publicly sponsored competition. Moreover, an essentially wholesale or industrial breed of management has been unable to afford the passenger train the retail-minded direction which it requires. Consequently, the passenger train is not merely passing from the American scene; it is threatening in some areas to take railroad solvency

with it. A crisis now exists. Nothing less than bold, realistic, statesmanlike action can preserve the institution."

JFK, LBJ, and PRR+NYC

In 1962, as the debate simmered, Pell began his campaign with a conversation with President Kennedy. As a native of Massachusetts, Kennedy was intrigued by Pell's ideas and in May 1963 established a White House task force to recommend a coordinated program of road, rail, and air service between Boston, New York, and Washington. The study was completed just days before Kennedy's assassination in November.

The idea might have ended there but for another quirk of political history. The study was just another of numerous documents that seem destined to sit on the shelf and gather dust, but Pell was a politically savvy man as well as a

NO RESPECT Even relatively pro-passenger roads like the Burlington could get ugly about train-offs. Immediately upon receiving permission to drop Omaha-Billings train 41 (pictured near Osage, Wyo., on May 28, 1969), the road halted it mid-run and bused its riders onward.

Bob Johnston





Ken Kraemer

SNOW JOB A Penn Central Buffalo-Harrisburg freight heads south at Holland, N.Y., in February 1970. This winter was hard on the already-shaky giant, but PC's huge passenger losses were a year-round burden.

dreamer. He knew that the new president, Johnson, had a solid political base in the South and West but was weak in the East. If "LBJ" was to compete in the election of 1964, he would need to do something to energize voters in the East and New England. Johnson not only bought the idea but also became quite serious about setting up a mechanism to be certain it happened.

In June 1964, about five months before the election, Johnson revived the Kennedy study. Johnson ordered more detailed studies, and in August, he formed the Northeast Corridor Project.

After the new Congress convened in early 1965, the re-elected LBJ proposed legislation to authorize \$20 million the first year and \$35 million each year thereafter for the project. As with almost everything the skillful politician Johnson asked for in those days, Congress passed the bill. Johnson signed the legislation on September 30, 1965.

Something else was brewing in 1965, however. The Pennsylvania and the New York Central were seeking a merger. Few outside a handful of top railroad officials knew how dire the financial condition of the two giants had become, especially PRR. Inside, Pennsy Chairman Stuart Saunders understood clearly that the two roads were in serious condition and that things were getting worse. NYC Chairman Alfred E. Perlman was leery of joining with PRR, but he saw no alternative, especially with other mergers sweeping the industry.

Johnson had no idea that the two railroads were in such straits, but he apparently did see that Saunders was anxious for the merger. The \$35 million a year authorized for the Corridor project was a small amount compared to the need, so the new fast-train projects were funded mostly by the Pennsy and the equally frail New Haven Railroad (which sought inclusion in the merged PRR-NYC). It was a cheap price to pay, the railroads thought, with the wolf at the door. The carriers needed Johnson's good will.

Saunders, in his zeal to save the railroad, agreed to almost anything Johnson wanted. He did not protest the ICC order to include the New Haven in the merger. He OK'd union demands to give all employees no-layoff jobs until they retired and also to rehire 5,000 laid-off workers. Such panicky agreements doomed the merger even before it was approved.

Meanwhile, the transportation functions of the federal government were rapidly changing. The Department of Transportation was formed on April 1, 1967. Until then, transportation matters were handled by the Commerce Department. Within the Transportation Department was the Office of High-Speed Ground Transportation in the Federal Railroad Administration. This office was set up to plan, analyze, and test possible high-speed solutions in the Boston-Washington corridor.

It was the job of the railroads, however, to plan and order the equipment. For operations south of New York, the Pennsylvania bought a fleet of multiple-unit electric cars—the *Metroliners*. The New Haven bought two United Aircraft Turbotrains.

Saunders was more than ready to use the *Metroliners* as his sacrificial offering to gain his merger. Within two weeks of Johnson's signing of the Northeast Corridor legislation, PRR sent government-approved specifications for the new cars to the builders. Saunders announced that the Corridor would be upgraded to 125-mph speeds and he confidently predicted 150-mph speeds within five years. Those trains would operate at a profit, he asserted.

Metroliner success story

Pennsy ordered 50 cars from Budd, with a further 11 added later; Westinghouse and GE supplied the electrical equipment. Even before the first delivery, there was trouble. For one thing, a major change was made to the design after the initial plans. Originally the *Metroliners* were to have lightweight, inside-frame trucks. But PRR mechanical department officials grew nervous about that—they didn't think such trucks would survive the harsh rail climate at high speeds. They wanted heavy, outside-frame trucks, and the government approved the change. This added 30 tons of weight to each car, which in turn necessitated more powerful traction motors. In the rush to get the cars in service, the effects of all the changes were not thoroughly tested.

Steve Ditmeyer, whose railroad career spans decades, joined the project in June 1968. Working in the rail systems group of the Office of High Speed Ground Transportation, he oversaw the contractors who were developing preliminary engineering and cost estimates. Ditmeyer said he and other engineers realized early on that there were major flaws in the program, but it was too late to do much about them. He and others worked to mitigate the problems, but they were not totally successful.

A major issue was ride quality. Ditmeyer said NASA engineers measured the vibrations. In non-engineering terms, they were enough to give most people a headache. "We knew there were bad dynamics," Ditmeyer said. "The cars were exhausting to ride." It turned out the vibration came from the heavy trucks, from transformers, and from carbody bending. The *Metroliners*

It was vital to remove the passenger burden before railroading began to go bankrupt.



T. H. Desnoyers; Krambles-Peterson Archive

also often swayed and bounced like a cork, sometimes throwing people against seats as they walked through.

Despite all this, the *Metroliners* were a howling success. The first revenue runs took place on January 16, 1969, to rave reviews by riders and the press. The flaws were simply ignored. Besides, from the railroads' perspective, the program had accomplished its purpose. After a long battle before the ICC and in the courts, the Penn Central merger was consummated on February 1, 1968. Just as importantly for the Amtrak story, the *Metroliners* were a successful example of federal support for passenger rail service.

Throughout this period, railroading was in a nosedive. Lou Thompson, then an FRA official who later supervised a government project to upgrade the Northeast Corridor beginning in 1978, noted that freight railroads had no interest in passengers and that by 1970, passenger deficits were draining \$470 million a year from the carriers. "The challenge was, thus, to rescue freight railroads from passenger deficits, and to rescue passenger service from freight management," Thompson said in a 2003 speech at Toulouse University. The passenger-train nosedive became a free fall in 1967 when the Post Office Department removed almost all mail carriage from passenger trains, a major source of revenue.

PRECEDENT The Northeast Corridor Project of the 1960s set the stage for further federal support of passenger trains. Though flawed, the New York-Washington *Metroliners* (above, at Seabrook, Md., in January '71) were a big hit; Turbo trains (right, at Pine Orchard, Conn.) worked New York-Boston.

It was vital that a way be found to remove the burden of the passenger train before railroading began to go bankrupt. But events overtook the effort.

Penn Central falls apart

Merger proved not to be the salvation of the PRR and NYC, and Penn Central was deteriorating fast. Saunders did everything he could to hide the true seriousness of the situation. He cut back sharply on maintenance. Badly needed investments were halted. Amazingly, PC also paid a dividend in 1968 that amounted to 63 percent of the company's net income, apparently as an expensive way to cover the truth. The 20,000-mile railroad's losses escalated from \$250,000 a day to \$500,000, and by the time 1970 dawned, losses had ballooned to \$1 million a day.

Penn Central was imploding, yet no one outside the company knew it. Some mid-level government people were leery, but members of Congress and senior government officials were not even suspicious. Their power to suspend skepticism was amazing. PC's internal scams



Tom Nelligan

and external audits simply did not reveal in clear terms what was really happening to the largest railroad in the nation.

As if all this wasn't bad enough, the weather turned against PC in early 1970, and the economy entered a recession. It wasn't just any old winter. Trains were abandoned by crews seeking shelter. Sometimes in the whiteout conditions, they weren't even sure where they

had left their trains. In one case a whole train was hidden by snowdrifts; management trainees went out in snowshoes with long probing rods looking for it. PC was almost out of cash, and there was little hope Saunders could keep the railroad's looming disaster secret much longer. Yet he tried.

Rush Loving, in his excellent 2006 book *The Men Who Loved Trains*, gives a fascinating and detailed description of Saunders' house of cards. Step by

step, suspicions grew, but Saunders and his finance man, David Bevan, enveloped Penn Central in a fog of paper assets and funny money, shifting assets from one company to another to make the core company appear solid.

In the end, word leaked to Wall Street that Penn Central was finished. There was a run on its stock. Saunders and other top officials were fired. On Sunday morning, June 21, 1970, just 873 days after the railroad was formed, PC attorneys visited Judge C. William Craft Jr. at his home and filed bankruptcy papers.

Some of the saviors

Despite the PC bankruptcy, the railroad's Northeast Corridor passenger operations, led by the *Metroliners*, continued to be heavily patronized—Pell's vision of megalopolis mobility was becoming reality. Federal plans to somehow save the passenger train as a means of travel—as distinct from saving the railroads *from* the passenger train—moved ahead with enthusiasm in Congress if not in the Nixon White House.

But one core fact is central to saving the passenger train: The public, en masse, wanted it. How do we know that? The first solid clue appeared in late 1969 and 1970 when masses of letters arrived on Capitol Hill demanding that Congress save the trains. Surprisingly, it was not an organized letter-writing campaign—congressional offices can always see through those. The pro-passenger-train letters that showered Congress were clearly individual efforts, and turned out to be the largest spontaneous congressional mailing in history, to that date. Congress was moved, and Congress listened.

Ditmeyer said almost every letter boiled down to "save my train." He remembered one particularly honest one: "I feel about my passenger train the way I feel about my church. I don't use either of them, but heaven help anyone who tries to take them away from me."

A lot of dedicated people stepped onto the passenger-train stage in the late 1960s. In addition to Ditmeyer and Lou Thompson, another railfan named Jim McClellan entered the scene. McClellan had worked for New York Central until Penn Central management dumped many forward-thinking ex-NYC marketing officers after the merger. By 1968, he was at the new Federal Railroad Administration and in a position to strongly influence the future of the passenger train.

McClellan, now writing a series of books on his history with the railroads, described a period when some of the

best and the brightest people came to government to work on the railroad crisis, including John A. Volpe, former Massachusetts governor and then U.S. Transportation Secretary. Bill Loftus, an officer with a union representing locomotive firemen, came to the FRA to help save railroading and stayed on for years to help restructure the industry.

Several people near the top of the Transportation Department spent a lot of time on railroad issues. "Paul Cherrington, who ran the policy office, came from Harvard," McClellan wrote. "Hardly a true believer, he did see that [passenger] trains might be useful in some markets. Cherrington's right-hand man on passenger issues, Bob Gallamore, was a closet railfan and at least sympathetic to passenger trains. At the Federal Railroad Administration, the new administrator, Reg Whitman, was not hostile to passenger trains; his prior company, the Great Northern, ran some of the finest trains in the country."

Gallamore acknowledged that he went to work at DOT as "a love-of-trains thing as opposed to economics." Top transportation officials bought the idea of Amtrak as a way to get the passenger train off the back of freight railroads and to "put it in the hands of professional marketers to see if something's not worth saving." Besides, Congress and the unions were "running amok" with ideas that would be much more expensive than an Amtrak-type solution.

McClellan said one of the most necessary decisions in forming Amtrak—and also the greatest mistake—was to call it a for-profit corporation. "We did not put all the cards on the table," McClellan said in an interview. "We bent the truth. That's politics."

Without that claim, he said, Amtrak would never have existed. "Neither the White House nor the more conservative members of Congress were going to sign off on an entity that was set up to be a perpetual ward of the state." Passenger losses then would burden the railroads for years longer, with potentially serious results for freight. Passenger trains were mostly irrelevant by the 1960s, McClellan said, but the downfall of freight railroading would have been a disaster for the country.

Of course, the "for profit" claim has come back to haunt Amtrak throughout

One core fact is central to saving the passenger train: The public wanted it.

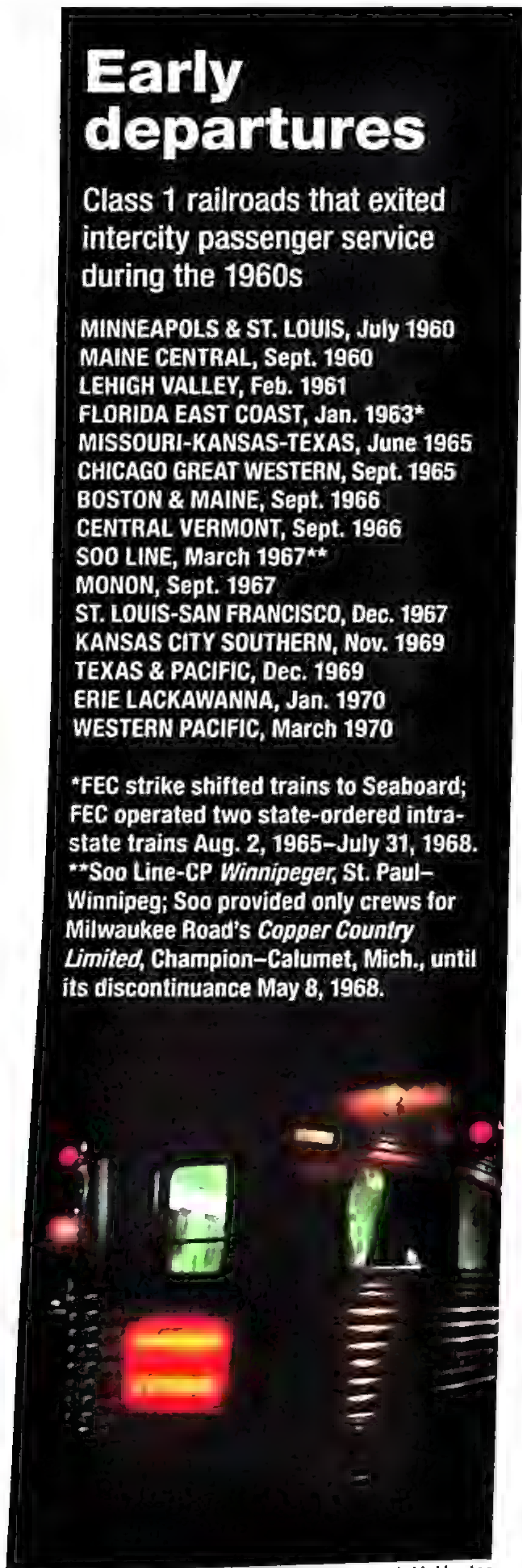
Early departures

Class 1 railroads that exited intercity passenger service during the 1960s

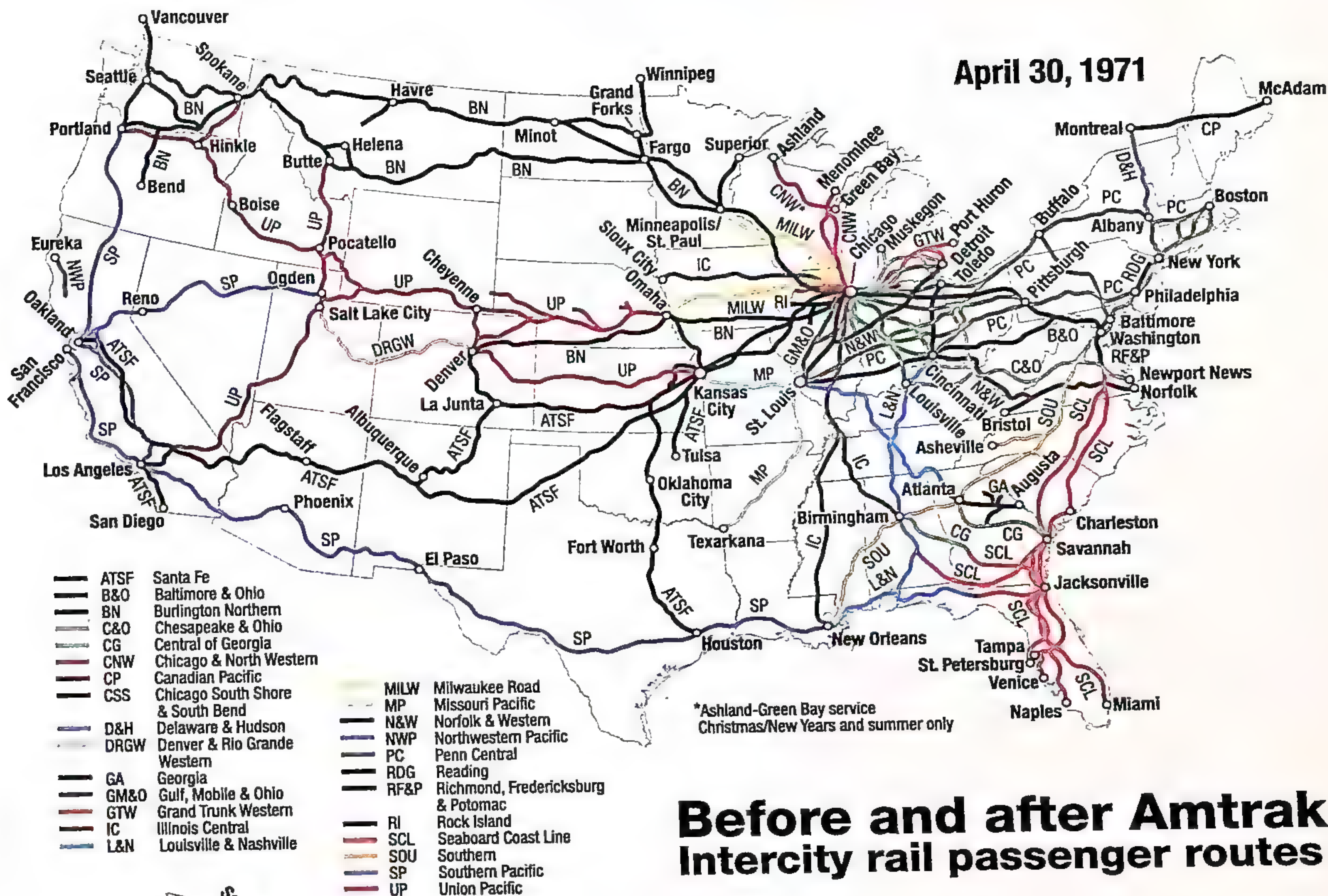
MINNEAPOLIS & ST. LOUIS, July 1960
MAINE CENTRAL, Sept. 1960
LEHIGH VALLEY, Feb. 1961
FLORIDA EAST COAST, Jan. 1963*
MISSOURI-KANSAS-TEXAS, June 1965
CHICAGO GREAT WESTERN, Sept. 1965
BOSTON & MAINE, Sept. 1966
CENTRAL VERMONT, Sept. 1966
SOO LINE, March 1967**
MONON, Sept. 1967
ST. LOUIS-SAN FRANCISCO, Dec. 1967
KANSAS CITY SOUTHERN, Nov. 1969
TEXAS & PACIFIC, Dec. 1969
ERIE LACKAWANNA, Jan. 1970
WESTERN PACIFIC, March 1970

*FEC strike shifted trains to Seaboard; FEC operated two state-ordered intra-state trains Aug. 2, 1965–July 31, 1968.

**Soo Line-CP *Winnipeg*, St. Paul–Winnipeg; Soo provided only crews for Milwaukee Road's *Copper Country Limited*, Champion–Calumet, Mich., until its discontinuance May 8, 1968.



Joseph H. Hunter



Before and after Amtrak Intercity rail passenger routes



Railroads eligible to join Amtrak

(Subsidiaries listed under parents)

Atchison, Topeka & Santa Fe
 Baltimore & Ohio
 Burlington Northern
 Chesapeake & Ohio
 Chicago & North Western^
 Chicago, Milwaukee, St. Paul & Pacific
 Chicago, Rock Island & Pacific*
 Chicago South Shore & South Bend*
 Delaware & Hudson^
 Denver & Rio Grande Western*
 Georgia Railroad*
 Grand Trunk Western^
 Gulf, Mobile & Ohio
 Illinois Central
 Louisville & Nashville
 Missouri Pacific
 Norfolk & Western^
 Penn Central
 Reading*
 Richmond, Fredericksburg & Potomac
 Seaboard Coast Line
 Southern*
 Central of Georgia^
 Southern Pacific
 Northwestern Pacific^
 Union Pacific

*=Railroads that did not join Amtrak

[see page 64]

^=Railroads that joined but operated no Amtrak trains beginning May 1, 1971



Top: Karl Zimmermann; left, R. T. Sharp; above, Illinois Central

FAREWELL, FRIENDS Varying degrees of ceremony attended the final runs of April 30. Norfolk & Western put ex-Nickel Plate 2-8-4 No. 759 on the *Pocahontas* (top, climbing Blue Ridge). UP hung an "Adios" tailsign on the *City of Los Angeles* (eastbound at Summit, Calif.). Someone at New Orleans chalked "LAST RUN" on the *Panama Limited's* Illinois Central E8.

its 40-year history. To this day, conservatives call Amtrak a failure because it's not making a profit. McClellan said he thinks many of these politicians have no concept of the true reality of passenger trains in 1970 and how they were saved. However, he said, "I did not think the losses would be where they are."

In any case, Amtrak was conceived in sin—political sin, anyway—and has paid for it since.

Intrigue and throat-cutting

The final battle to pass Amtrak legislation was filled with intrigue and political throat-cutting. What was supposedly the White House plan to save the passenger train was announced on January 18, 1970. The plan contained a \$40

million grant to allow a new semi-public entity, the National Railroad Passenger Corp. (NRPC, or "Railpax"), to be established to take over intercity passenger service.

To the great surprise of Volpe and the department, White House Press Secretary Ron Ziegler announced the next day that Railpax was the "least likely" plan to be approved by the administration. Volpe disputed Ziegler, and a rare public debate raged for a while. Then there was silence. The Senate Commerce Committee decided to call the White House's bluff. It approved a much larger \$435 million subsidy bill on March 12. Still, the White House stonewalled Congress, and the Railpax bill remained closeted within the Nixon administration.

The Senate delayed action for a while, then decided to move ahead with the committee bill. Or did it really decide that? A funny thing happened on the night of April 30, 1970. Ditmeyer

says that the Railpax bill, which had never been formally submitted to Congress, mysteriously made its way there from the Transportation Department. The delivery was totally unofficial, never officially approved by the White House, and if anyone knows who delivered it, they're not talking to this day.

The next day, May 1, 1970, Sens. Vance Hartke (Dem.-Indiana) and Winston Prouty (Rep.-Vermont), introduced the Railpax bill as a substitute for the committee bill. There was almost no debate, and their bill quickly passed, 78 to 3. Under the pressure of the PC bankruptcy, and the dire condition of several other Northeast railroads, the House passed a similar bill on October 14, and the Senate quickly approved a few House amendments. Nixon was under great pressure from some of his staff to veto it, but his fear of having to nationalize some or all of the freight railroads led him to sign it on October 30.

More on our website

See more photos of pre-Amtrak last runs on PC, Santa Fe, D&H, MoPac, UP, and other roads at www.ClassicTrainsMag.com



Amtrak



Ken Douglas; J. David Ingles collection

DAY ONE Despite court challenges and a name change (from "Railpax") just 12 days earlier, Amtrak began as scheduled on May 1, 1971. That day, Passenger Service Rep (and ex-SCL hostess) Patty Saunders posed with the first system timetable, while PC E8 4316 and coach 1589 wore unique liveries for display in New York; 4316 is seen with train 362 on August 7.

Among its provisions, the law set a target of May 1, 1971, for NRPC to begin operations, and imposed a moratorium on train-offs before that date. The rail passenger network would remain frozen for six months.

But the battle wasn't over. Under the law, the Transportation Department had to designate new passenger-train routes. The White House ordered Volpe to select the Northeast Corridor and a handful of long-distance routes, which angered Congress. Volpe was forced to add several routes, and apparently was happy to do so. On January 28, 1971, Volpe announced the final routes, adding five that were not in his original plan. No specific stops or exact routes were announced until later—Volpe didn't want to reveal Railpax's plans before the railroads signed up.

Shortly after Nixon signed the legislation, he named a board of incorporators to establish exact routes and make other basic decisions including negotiating operating contracts with the railroads before the NRPC takeover. With the aid of consultants and staff detailed from the DOT and FRA, they examined such issues as on-line population, ridership information, losses from current trains, and track condition. The de-

tailed staff included McClellan and Ed Edel, who went on to head public relations at Amtrak for many years.

Railroads still operating intercity passenger trains could join Railpax with cash or rolling stock according to one of three formulas: 50 percent of the road's passenger deficit for 1969; 100 percent of the avoidable loss for passenger operations in 1969; or 200 percent of the avoidable losses of service operated in 1969 between points to be served by the basic NRPC system. Member roads would get Railpax common stock. The contract that was eventually worked out called for NRPC to pay the roads for the actual cost of furnishing service plus reasonable terminal costs plus 5 percent.

Most important, Railpax achieved something the railroads never could—total freedom from regulation. NRPC could add or drop service and change fares at will, with one exception: it had to maintain service on all the "basic routes" until July 1, 1973. Volpe announced those exact basic routes and stops on March 22, 1971.

Much activity took place in the final month. On April 1, discontinuance notices were posted for the trains not included in Railpax. Of about 259 intercity train pairs then running in the U.S., 110 would be cut. On April 16, final contracts were signed between the government and 20 of the 26 railroads eligible to join [see box on facing page]. On the 19th, the NRPC's marketing name was shifted from Railpax to Amtrak, for "American, travel, and track." On April 22, word leaked that Roger Lewis would be Amtrak's first president. A former



Matt Van Hattem collection

chief executive of defense contractor General Dynamics, Lewis had no experience in the rail travel field, a reflection of the Nixon administration's ambivalence toward Amtrak.

On April 28, a flurry of last-minute efforts to delay or kill Amtrak broke out in Congress, led by Senate Democratic Leader Mike Mansfield of Montana and Democratic Sen. Warren Magnuson of Washington. The next day, April 29, the Senate Commerce Committee rejected the Mansfield-Magnuson proposal. Magnuson refused to give up, holding the Senate in session into the night of April 30 in an unsuccessful effort to ram through his legislation.

Numerous lawsuits were filed in the last two weeks of April by labor groups, the National Association of Railroad Passengers, and others. After efforts by dissatisfied members of Congress to delay the startup of Amtrak were pushed aside, and after a favorable last-minute court ruling on April 30, Amtrak began operations at 12:01 a.m. on May 1, 1971. ■

Amtrak was conceived in political sin, and has paid for it ever since.

Ride 'em while you can

A weeklong trek in April 1971 netted 8 new routes and the last Alco PA's

By J. David Ingles • Photos by the author

Many of us who could take advantage of the situation spent some time in early 1971 riding or taking pictures of passenger trains due to expire upon the May 1 start-up of Amtrak. This sea change in U.S. railroading was personal for me, on two fronts. Sometime that spring, as the end of so many passenger trains loomed, I made two decisions. One was to ride some doomed routes I hadn't seen, and their upcoming demise became the catalyst for my second decision—to have the time to ride, I resigned my newspaper position, which I'd been contemplating anyway.

Next, I had to formulate some itineraries. "Rare mileage" wasn't in the lexicon yet, though I'd always liked to ride a new train or new route, and this shaped my plans.

My pre-Amtrak goals were twofold: Log "new" (to me) routes out of Chicago, and see Delaware & Hudson's PA's. (I already had a "PA reputation" from my November 1966 *TRAINS* article on the Alcos, and had ridden behind them on three roads and photographed them on eight others. Although I'd seen the D&H itself at the 1967 NRHS convention in Albany, that was before the road purchased its four PA's from the Santa Fe.)

I planned two long trips and one short overnight turn, all focused on routes that would expire. Previously, I'd been privileged to ride scheduled trains on three dozen U.S. railroads through 40 states, and they covered the gamut, from overnight one-coach locals (on the likes of Chesapeake & Ohio, Louisville & Nashville, and Milwaukee) to streamliners (*California Zephyr*, *Colorado Eagle*, *North Coast* and *20th Century*

Limiteds). So it was routes, not necessarily equipment, that mattered.

On Friday, April 16, I drove from my home in Springfield, Ill., to my grandmother's recently vacated house in the Chicago south suburbs, where I usually bunked. The first of my contemplated long trips, a circle west via Kansas City, did not come to pass [see sidebar, page 40]. Instead, I hung around Chicago to photograph some soon-to-expire trains. I did make the other big trip, east to see the PA's—the tale that follows—and then salvaged one key segment of the aborted journey through K.C.

Go east, young man

The trip east, whose details jelled as I went along, wound up being a week-long, five-railroad, 10-state trek. I rode 10 trains, from the most minimal service to the best the eastern roads had to offer. Although sleeper routes had thinned out, I did spend two nights in roomettes. I would ride more than 2,500 miles, almost three-quarters of them new for my "mileage map."

A third goal was to log a couple of more routes serving Cincinnati. I'd been there many times—starting in 1960, ramping up in 1966 during a year of graduate school in Knoxville, Tenn., and later on visits to friends—but I'd ridden only 5 of the 10 passenger routes into Union Terminal. (Two of the five I had-



n't ridden would survive under Amtrak: C&O east and the former New York Central west. A third, C&O of Indiana, long had been freight-only, though amazingly it would gain Amtrak a few years hence.)

So on Tuesday, April 20, I hopped an Illinois Central electric suburban train from Homewood to Randolph Street downtown and taxied across the Loop to Chicago Union Station.

My first intercity train was typical of what many services had become—one of those one-coach locals. It was Penn Central 66, the remnant of Pennsy's *Buckeye*. I'd ridden PC's so-called *South Wind* to Louisville in 1969, but by then you had to change there to the "real" *South Wind*, on L&N. From Logansport, Ind., to the Queen City, PC 66's route would be new for me. The experience, however, would far surpass the train's bare-bones nature.





Thanks to a friendly crew, here is the Indiana countryside between Kokomo and Elwood as seen from the cab of Penn Central E7 4211 on April 20, 1971. No. 66 had just 10 days to live.



At Logansport's Van station, there was time for a photo during the crew change on PC No. 66.

Only about a quarter of the seats in former NYC coach 2926 were occupied when we left Chicago on-time at 10:25 a.m. Ahead were one of the ubiquitous PRR B60 baggage cars and PC E7 4211, also ex-PRR. The crew was cordial, and

their comments reflected the time's uncertainties. The conductor thought IC had stayed out of Railpax (the early working name for Amtrak), and of No. 66's passenger loads, the flagman said, "We'll have to add a second coach when



At Richmond: Jim Hackney (left), John Long.



At speed east of Christiansburg, Va., on April 21, the vestibule view of N&W 4 got dusty!

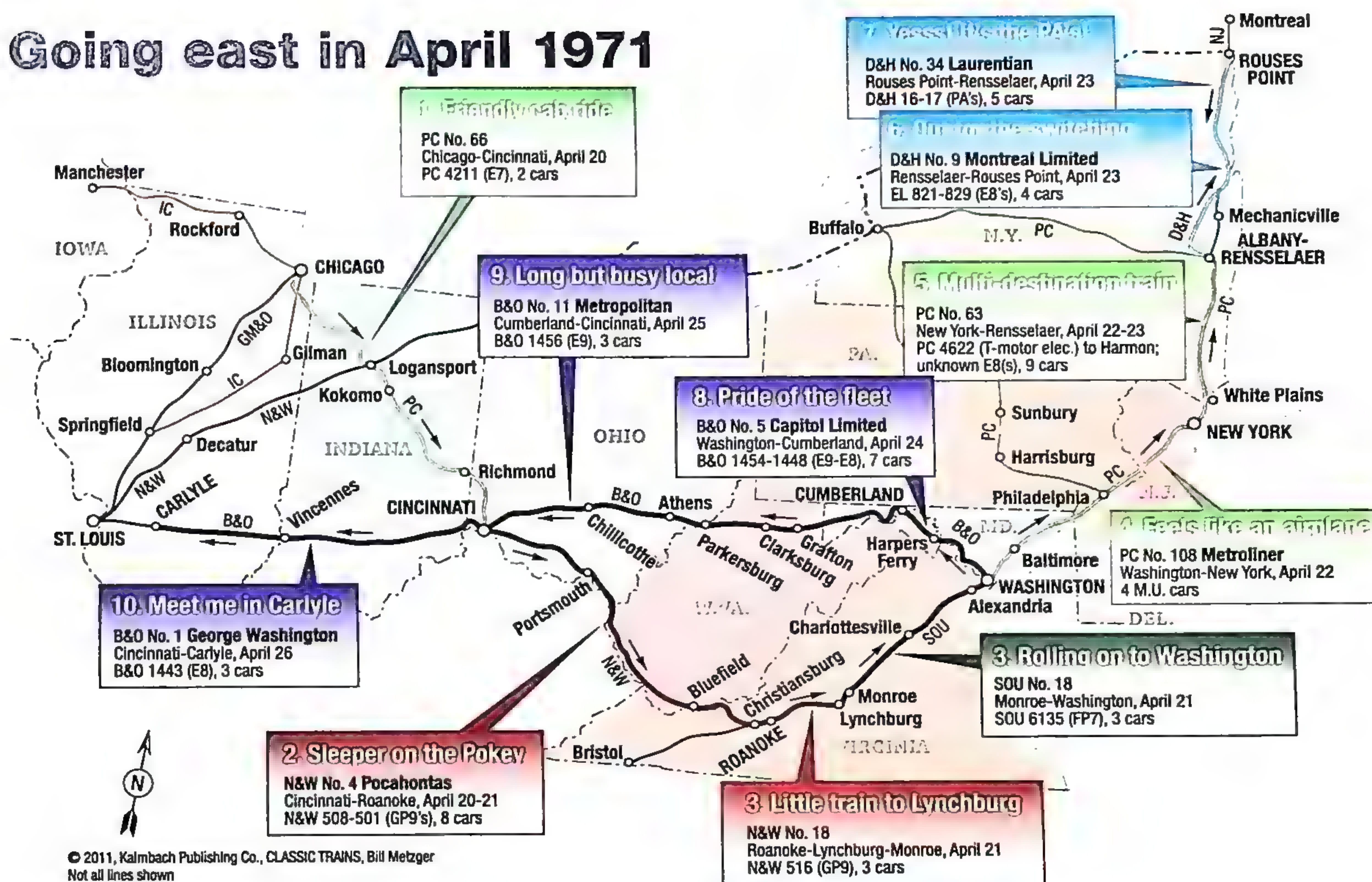
school's out . . . if we last that long." (They would not, of course.) By the second stop, North Judson, Ind., at 1:05 p.m., clouds had given way to sunlight, and when we stopped for our first crew change, at Van station (short for "Vandalia Line") on Logansport's west side, I detoured to get a photo.

I don't recall any conversation with the new crew at Van, but on the platform at Kokomo, the next stop, the conductor, Earl Hawkins, invited me to go ride in the locomotive cab! So for 85 miles, through Elwood, Anderson, and New Castle, I was in the 4211 with engineer John Long and fireman Jim Hackney to Richmond, a major point on the former PRR Pittsburgh-St. Louis main line, where the crews changed again at 5 p.m. during a 20-minute stop. We made a brief stop at Hamilton, Ohio, at 6:10, and a bit later we halted at Norwood (whose depot platform was surrounded by a chain-link fence), then entered the B&O for the last few miles into Cincinnati Union Terminal, looking into a hazy sunset.

Our 7:05 arrival gave me ample time to connect with Norfolk & Western 4,

Norfolk & Western train 18, the intrastate remnant of the old *Birmingham Special*, toddles into Roanoke on time at 10:55 a.m. (top) to connect with the *Pocahontas*, which, after having two head-end cars removed and business car 101 added to the rear, and swapping pairs of GP9's, left at 11:10 (above) after 45-minute stay. Tiny No. 18 would leave for Washington at 12:20 p.m.

Going east in April 1971



the *Pocahontas*. Once again I took in the ambience of what TRAINS Editor David P. Morgan called "the grandest railroad architecture I had ever seen." CUT activity wasn't what I'd experienced in past years, of course, but you could still eat in the station restaurant, which I did after buying my tickets to Roanoke, Va., and on to Washington, D.C. I tried to listen for quiet conversations across the giant rotunda, then gazed at the wall murals and wandered the long concourse. With Amtrak planning only one route through Cincinnati, I was concerned about the great terminal's future.

Still a positive approach

N&W was down to only four passenger-train pairs systemwide plus its Chicago commuter train, but you couldn't fault its approach on its "flagship," the *Pocahontas*. The "Pokey's" Cincinnati-Norfolk sleeping car was N&W's last such line, and "first class" was gone—as on some other roads, a coach ticket and a modest room charge got you a sleeper room. The car was open for boarding at 9:30, almost 2 hours before departure. The train carried a dome coach all the way and a diner between Williamson, W.Va., and Norfolk. For sleeping-car

passengers, breakfast eastbound and dinner westbound were complimentary—in its way, this train was the opposite of PC No. 66.

I settled into my roomette before departure but stayed awake to watch us leave town. The car was *Buchanan County*, one of six 1948 Pullman-Standard 10-roomette/6-double-bedroom cars for two interline routes out of New York, to Richmond (via PRR and Richmond, Fredericksburg & Potomac) and Norfolk, Va. (via PRR, RF&P, Atlantic Coast Line, N&W). My car was one of three *County*-series 10&6's for N&W; RF&P's three were *King*-series. We left at 11:25 and I was long asleep before our 2 a.m. stop at Portsmouth, Ohio.

The car ahead was 1610, first of three dome coaches Budd built for Wabash's *Blue Bird* and one of two N&W moved east after the 1964 merger (Appalachian scenery does beat central Illinois and Missouri, I'll admit). So, dome fan that I am, next morning after my free dining-car breakfast, I headed upstairs. (The diner, 493—a 1949 P-S car for the *Powhatan Arrow* but now adorned with "The Pocahontas" script emblem on its flank—spent about 2 hours in Williamson, being added behind our sleeper around 5 a.m.) Soon after I settled in

the dome, nearing 9 on a hazy morning, we stopped at Narrows, Va., and at 9:40 we made an on-time stop at Christiansburg. Power for our eight-car train was two blue GP9's, 508 and 501. As we got closer to Roanoke, I went to a Dutch door to photograph N&W freights.

We arrived Roanoke 5 minutes early at 10:25, giving me a layover of almost two hours. The sky had turned cloudy, but there was plenty of action through the station. First, passenger train 18, scheduled to connect with the eastbound Pokey, toddled in on-time at 10:55. The depot switcher, GP9 687, removed two of No. 4's storage-mail cars, added business car 101 to the rear, and with replacement GP9's 519 and 517 up front, the *Pocahontas* left on-time at 11:10.

I walked east on the platforms, photographing out-of-service diesels across the way on shop tracks: ex-Wabash Fairbanks-Morse switchers, Wabash and Virginian FM Train Masters, Nickel Plate Alcos, and some original N&W units. Nearby in the coach yard were N&W spare sleepers and business cars, including open-platform parlor-observation 700 *Lafayette*, moved east from Illinois and renamed from *City of Lafayette* when it joined the business fleet.



Richmond, Fredericksburg & Potomac was a new photo subject for the author; two GP35's and a '40 roll through Alexandria toward Potomac Yard.



Under catenary on former PRR track in Arlington, Va., on April 22, a B&O freight out of "Pot Yard," behind two GP38's and a GP40, heads for the "Long Bridge" over the Potomac River into Washington, D.C., passing Southern train 17, bound for Lynchburg, Roanoke, and Bristol, Va.

A freight in each direction passed, and soon I had to go upstairs to retrieve my luggage from the depot, for it was time to board No. 18, due out at 12:20 p.m.

I'd ridden this train up from Knoxville on my only previous Roanoke visit, in 1966, when it was still the *Birmingham Special*, a joint Southern-N&W run from Alabama to the nation's capital [see "Carolina Circle," Fall 2002 CLASSIC TRAINS]. It already had lost its sleeping cars but was still a big train, heavy with head-end business. Now, though, forced to keep running under the pre-Amtrak train-off embargo, it was basically an intrastate version of PC 66, originating at Bristol, Va., with a minimal consist: N&W GP9 516, a Southern baggage car, and two coaches, this day a pair from Southern's 800-series.

The Geep easily handled the little train over to Lynchburg, where we took the connection to the Southern and stopped on-time at 1:30 at the Kemper Street station that Amtrak uses today. At Monroe, 7 miles north, we halted to change crews, and engines, to Southern FP7 6135. Then we waited for a south-bound piggybacker to pass before rolling on north to Washington Union Station, arriving 10 minutes late at 5:50.

Time for new subjects

Since I was in unfamiliar territory, I made time to photograph new subjects. The RF&P was one, so I rented a car in D.C. and drove over to a motel I'd seen just before the "Long Bridge" over the Potomac, a Marriott in Arlington, Va. It

backed onto the tracks, which sported overhead catenary—this was former PRR as far as the end of RF&P's Potomac Yard. Thursday morning, I visited the "Pot Yard" engine terminal and photographed alongside the yard as well as right in back of my motel, plus at Alexandria's passenger station. Variety was in vogue—freights of Southern (two with SD45's, two with GP30's), RF&P (GP35's), Baltimore & Ohio (GP's under wire), and PC (GG1's and E44's), and passenger trains of Seaboard Coast Line (on RF&P), Southern, and C&O.

In mid-afternoon I returned the auto and boarded my fourth train, the epitome of eastern passenger service: a PC *Metroliner* for New York. Although this was my first Northeast Corridor ride, I took scant notes and just two photos—at Union Station, of snack bar-coach 858 leading my train 108, the 4:30 departure, and depot switcher RS1 No. 44.

I do have a vivid memory, though, of my first impression upon boarding the *Metroliner*: "This is just an airplane without wings." Such was the effect of the curved sidewalls, low ceiling, and substantial overhead luggage racks. An *Official Guide* from early 1971 lists a one-way Washington–New York *Metroliner* coach ticket at \$17, \$4 more than standard coach; upgrading to a Metroclub parlor would've been \$6.40 more (gotta love those 1971 prices!).

After arriving Penn Station at 7:30 p.m. (a ride averaging 76 mph), I taxied to Grand Central to board PC 63, due out at 10:30. This was my first visit to both New York terminals. No. 63 would begin my trip's second, and last, sleeping-car ride. The last of eight ex-NYC intercity departures for the day (three to Albany–Rensselaer, three to Buffalo, two to Chicago), 63 carried a Sleeper-coach overnight to Buffalo, with coaches (one providing snack service) going on to Chicago.

Permit a review here: Penn Central No. 61, the descendant of the *20th Century Limited*, still had sleeping cars for Detroit, on train 17 out of Buffalo, and for Chicago, via Cleveland, plus a diner for Chicago. After NYC discontinued the *Century* in late '67, it introduced New York–Buffalo "Empire Service," with fewer but faster schedules and food available, but all former NYC trains except the Chicago–Cincinnati *James Whitcomb Riley* lost their names. Under PC, ex-Pennsy and New Haven trains still were named, but "Empire Service" disappeared from the *Guide*.

My train 63, however, also carried through cars for D&H No. 9, the *Montreal Limited*. My plan was to take it all the way and make a quick turn back on



Penn Central *Metroliner* 108 prepares for departure from Union Station to give the author his first Northeast Corridor ride. Across the platform rests Washington Terminal Alco RS1 No. 44.

the daytime *Laurentian*, No. 34. The 15-minute connection at Montreal's Windsor Station was likely out of the question, but Montreal West, the first of three city stops, offered a 45-minute layover. I noted at Grand Central that we'd depart behind PC third-rail class T motor 4622 with nine cars: three NYC head-end, an NYC Sleepercoach, a PC-lettered ex-NYC coach, Canadian Pacific sleepers *Willow Grove* and *Balsam Grove* (both in silver, *Willow* with a CP Rail multimark and red stripe, *Balsam* with CANADIAN PACIFIC spelled out on a Tuscan stripe), a D&H coach, and a D&H baggage car. (The sleepers were among 19 "curved side" 10&5 cars built in 1950 by National Steel Car and finished at CPR's Angus shops.) Once in

my roomette, I was out soon after we left, and slept through all the separation activity at Rensselaer.

Next morning along Lake Champlain, I headed for a Dutch door to look toward our power. I'd heard D&H had leased some Erie Lackawanna E8's, and sure enough, we had two, 829 and 821, both ex-Erie; this meant that PA's likely were on the *Laurentian*, a train resuscitated in 1967 by D&H boss Frederick C. "Buck" Dumaine Jr. with ex-Rio Grande cars and then the PA's.

When we stopped at Rouses Point, a consultation with a trainman revealed we were sufficiently late to endanger my changing trains anywhere in Montreal. I took the prudent course and detrained. After No. 9 left, I stashed my bags in the



PC GG1's 4811 and 4835, the latter still wearing its Pennsylvania broad gold stripe, approach the Potomac River bridge in Arlington. They'll take the "Anacostia freight line" through D.C.



Left to right, top to bottom on April 23 at Rouses Point: the Erie Lackawanna E8's on D&H train 9, the *Montreal Limited*, get serviced; the engineer on Napierville Junction RS2 4051 points to a colleague; *Laurentian* No. 34 has pulled in; and a freight waits for our No. 34 to clear.

depot and walked down the street for breakfast. Afterward, I photographed a few items of parked D&H equipment including an RS3 trio, plus the local freight crew going to work in RS2 4051, one of two in D&H colors but lettered for Napierville Junction, the subsidiary connection to CPR in Montreal.

Objective realized

The RS3's left the small yard north of the Quebec border and moseyed south with a freight, and then about 10 a.m., the *Laurentian* could be heard approaching.

Yesss! Gorgeous PA's 16 and 17 burbled into view and pulled beyond the depot with their four cars (baggage, ex-Rio Grande diner-lounge *James Peak*, and two ex-Erie coaches); soon PC coach 3638 was added. The sky was overcast, but heading south I was in mental sunshine, taking too many pho-

tos on curves from a Dutch door of the Alcos up front. We stayed 20 to 30 minutes late, but I didn't care. I did take a break for lunch in *James Peak*, served by a waitress, unusual for the time.

The *Laurentian's* route into New York state's "Capital District" had changed in 1968 when Albany Union Station closed in favor of PC's new small depot across the Hudson in Rensselaer. Instead of going via Mechanicville and Colonie Shop, we breezed through Schenectady and onto the Water Level Route to go east 17 miles, down West Albany Hill and across Albany's north Hudson bridge. Thanks to the state's upgrade of the old NYC main on this stretch, the PA's hit 90 mph for a few miles!

We pulled into Rensselaer's Track 3. There was switching to do, so after totting my bags inside, I returned to admire the parked PA's, now in bright sunlight. PC SW8 8602 removed D&H coach

1001 and PC 3638, adding them the rear of train 72, in from Buffalo and standing on Track 2 with PC E8 4251, a buffet-bar coach, and a coach. They would go on to Grand Central, but without me.

Inside the bright and busy depot, which had a lunchroom and a well-stocked rack of timetables, I looked in vain for one revealing which days the tri-weekly remnant of the old PRR *Buffalo Day Express* ran to Harrisburg. I had ideas of riding it, but there was no point in going to Buffalo if I had to wait more than a day to go on south. Another railfan at the rack was seeking the same answer, and the PC clerks, though cordial, were of no help. After all, who here cared about that "Pennsy" train—this was New York Central territory!

Flexibility pays off

My intent was to finish my trip on the B&O from Washington, D.C., to



Cincinnati and St. Louis, gaining one more Queen City route. My only B&O rides had been St. Louis–Cincinnati and Cincy–Detroit, plus a morning ride from Pittsburgh to Deshler, Ohio, and an overnight ride on the *Capitol Limited* from Pittsburgh to Chicago. I told the railfan in Rensselaer about my plans: getting to D.C. and overnighing at the same Marriott in Arlington, then taking the B&O west. He offered a better suggestion: take the *Capitol Limited* out of Washington and stay at the less-expensive trackside Holiday Inn in Cumberland, Md., catching the Cincinnati train the next morning.

I took his advice. Instead of trying Buffalo or repeating Rensselaer–New York–Washington by rail, I hung around and enjoyed a longer look at the D&H and its Alcos. I rented a car, dropped by Colonie Shop at sunset, and took a motel room. Saturday morning, after booking a midday flight to D.C., I drove back to Colonie and spent an hour with Alcos—RS3's, RS11's, C628's, and "my"

PA's 16 and 17 from the day before, plus some passenger cars. I had time to replicate my 1967 visit to Mechanicville, where the D&H offered two C628's and a GE U30C and Boston & Maine, in its adjacent yard, presented five NW2's (four in black, one in blue) plus a train ready to head east behind three "Blue-bird" GP9's and blue F3 4228. Two high-nose D&H RS11's came in, light, from east of the Hudson, but I couldn't wait for the B&M freight to depart, as I had to head for the airport. My flight, ultimately one of two I'd have on Mohawk Airlines (both in Convair 580 prop-jets), was direct to Washington National Airport with one intermediate stop, at White Plains, N.Y.

A short taxi ride got me from National Airport to Washington Union Station in plenty of time to buy my B&O tickets for my 4:40 departure on No. 5, pride of the fleet. The service was still classy B&O, but the consist, which reflected the 1963 B&O/C&O alliance, was a shadow of its former self—seven cars

One of "too many" Dutch-door shots of the *Laurentian*—"vestibule overkill," as it is called—shows the sleek and smoking PA's.

behind a ratty E9/E8 duo: an REA boxcar, three coaches, B&O 5-bedroom-lounge *Dana*, a 10&6 sleeper (sketchy notes hint at C&O 2638 *Clifton Forge*), and C&O lunch-counter-diner-observation 1922 *City of Charleston*. Both the *Dana*, built for the Washington–Detroit *Ambassador*, and the *City of Charleston*, to be for Robert R. Young's planned *Chessie* streamliner, had blunt-end, rear-facing lounge windows, although *Dana*'s weren't of much use mid-train.

I again spent time in a Dutch door, photographing B&O signals, the Point of Rocks depot, a rare B&O SD7 at Brunswick, the parallel C&O Canal, and the sights at Harpers Ferry. Then it was time for dinner in the rear car, and an after-sunset ride into Cumberland a couple of minutes early at 7:38. I walked over to the Holiday Inn and was lulled to sleep by growling freights.

The trips not made

Sometimes, sanity must prevail

What did my big trip not taken, the "circle west via Kansas City" [page 30], amount to? Basically, a four-day marathon involving four doomed coach-only trains on four railroads through seven states, with two bridge-the-gap bus rides and two of the three overnights on-the-go. Doing all that solo, in a tight time frame before my eastern trip, was why it didn't happen—sometimes sanity must prevail.

I would've begun by riding Illinois Central's *Hawkeye* 510 miles overnight from Chicago to Sioux City, Iowa. The 8:30 a.m. arrival would give me a full 24 hours to get 100 miles south to Omaha for the departure of BN No. 36, last service on the former CB&Q 195 miles to Kansas City. This train was one E unit and one coach, terminating at the Murray Yard office in North Kansas City. An on-time arrival of 12:30 p.m. would allow 5-plus hours to get across town to K.C. Union Station for the 6:05 p.m. departure of Santa Fe 211, the *Tulsa*, for the 256-mile ride to Oklahoma's second city.

I never got as far as looking up bus schedules, but 211 arrived in Tulsa at 11 p.m., and the next leg was to be Missouri Pacific 2, the nameless remnant of the *Texas Eagle*, due out of Little Rock at 7:55 a.m. and into St. Louis at 3:20 p.m. The train made an overnight run from the Gateway City to Texarkana and went north in daylight, but getting from Tulsa to Texarkana would've taken too long. Busing from Tulsa to Little Rock would've been at night. I didn't want to backtrack from Tulsa to K.C., then take the MP to St. Louis and make a Texarkana round trip, as that would've added a day. MoPac still ran the *Missouri River Eagle* plus a nameless afternoon train from K.C. to St. Louis, but I'd ridden the route.

Either way, my last leg off MoPac No. 2 would've been on the connecting, and familiar, GM&O No. 4, the *Limited*, which left St. Louis at 4 p.m. and arrived Chicago at 9:30. Excluding the GM&O leg, the circle would've been 1,310 miles, half of my eastern trip total, all but 162 miles (Freeport, Ill.—Waterloo, Iowa, on the IC) new for me. But time constraints and mulling the possibilities after Tulsa killed my enthusiasm.

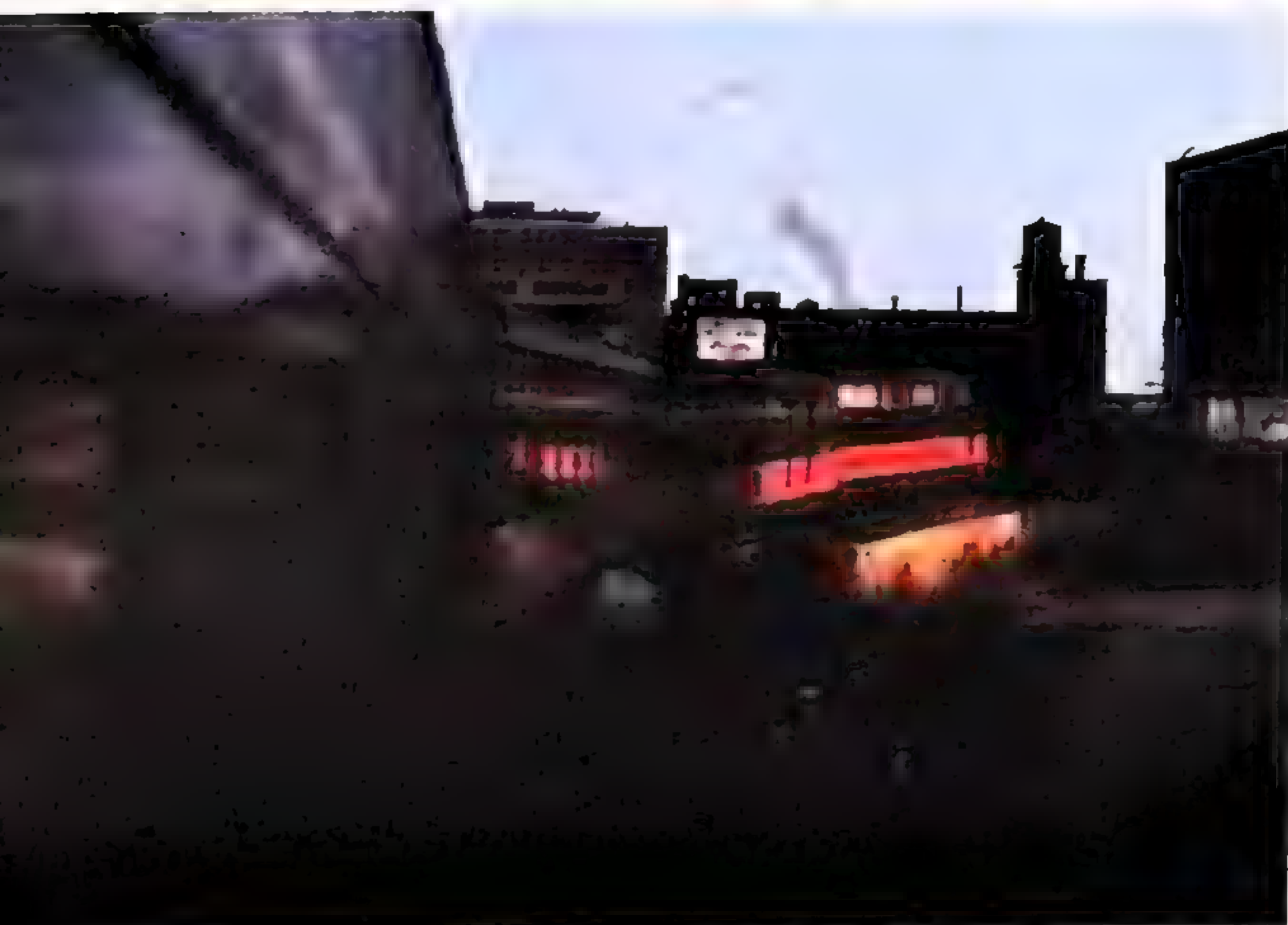
Eventually, Amtrak returned to the MoPac segment, and I've since logged some of the *Tulsa*'s and BN 36's routes, plus all the IC Iowa line (to Omaha, though, not Sioux City) on regular Amtrak trains, excursions, and an Amtrak detour.

I was back in Chicago from the East on April 27, and

planned to make the aforementioned overnight turn on the 28th-29th, to Michigan on the C&O, which would've added a Windy City route I didn't have. C&O still ran a Chicago-Grand Rapids evening train, with a lone coach connecting from Holland, Mich., to Muskegon. The connection was simply one timetable line in the *Official Guide*, and I woke up to its existence late in the game. I would go to Muskegon, bus over to Grand Rapids, and return the next morning. Alas, I missed the train—literally. I was walking, in the rain, to IC's Homewood station and was a half block away when the last suburban train that would get me into Chicago in time left. I recovered from that mistake, however, and the next night, Thursday the 29th, salvaged another new Chicago route, the IC Iowa Division. (Years later, a Chessie excursion from Grand Rapids would gain me the C&O Chicago entry.)

On that morning of the 29th, after photographing IC's outbound *City of New Orleans* and *Governor's Special*, and the inbound *Panama Limited*, all at Homewood, plus old friend PC 66 at nearby Lansing, I took an IC electric downtown. Among my photo subjects were N&W's *City of Decatur* and L&N's *Danville Flyer*, leaving from soon-to-be-silent Dearborn Station. I walked to Central Station to see the 6:15 and 6:30 arrivals of IC's *Illini* and *City of Miami*, the latter with SCL dome sleeper *Sunlight Dome* on the rear. My target was the second-to-last departure of IC 11, the *Hawkeye*, at 7 p.m. I bought a \$24 round-trip ticket to Manchester, Iowa, 229 miles out, from where by schedule I could return on No. 12 after a 28-minute layover (I actually had 42 minutes in Manchester). Each *Hawkeye* had a single E unit, with five cars on No. 11 and four cars on No. 12. And yes, I did manage to get some sleep.

Back in Central Station on-time at 7:15 on the 30th, I went upstairs to buy a \$7.79 one-way ticket to Springfield on the last *Governor's Special*, departing through Gate 3 at 8:15. This began my three-train "last-run farewell," as Carol drove me from Springfield 35 miles to Decatur to ride N&W's last *Wabash Cannon Ball* to St. Louis. After photographing the final departure of MoPac No. 1, behind C&EI's only E9, No. 43, I concluded the pre-Amtrak era with an overnight coach ride on GM&O 6, the *Midnight Special*, back to Chicago, where I spent the first three days of May 1971 photographing more last private and first Amtrak runs.—J.D.I.



The penultimate Illinois Central westbound *Hawkeye* curves out of Central Station, Chicago (left), onto the St. Charles Air Line, en route to Sioux City, Iowa. During my 42-minute layover in Manchester, Iowa, I stayed awake by setting up for night shots of the depot, a pair of parked Geeps, and a passing freight (above).

close to schedule and arrived Cincinnati 8 minutes early at 11:12. I taxied to a familiar nearby Holiday Inn and returned to CUT early next morning.

My last train had a C&O name—*George Washington*—on the B&O across Indiana and Illinois, to me a misnomer. Numbered 1, it was simply the schedule extension of C&O's flagship, but it wasn't much, just an REA boxcar and two C&O coaches behind B&O E8 1443. A sleeper from Newport News had come off at Cincinnati, while a coach, the "Iron Horse Tavern" dining car, and a Washington sleeper, all for Louisville, had cut off at Ashland, Ky. By this time, connecting train No. 47 (the old *Sportsman*) from Huntington, W.Va., to Detroit ran only on weekends. The *Guide* says my B&O No. 1 had "attendant service," with food and beverages to Vincennes, Ind., but I don't remember a food cart or attendant. Then again, I was getting travel weary.

At CUT, I got trackside to photograph two L&N E8's, ex-Frisco, parked to the north, and—as with B&O No. 6 at Cumberland—took a substitute photo of N&W's *Pocahontas* as it arrived, now six days since I departed on it in late evening. GP9's 508 (again) and 514 rolled in with nine cars, with "my" sleeper, *Buchanan County*, on the rear.

The highlight of my final trip segment was our Queen City departure. Right on time this sunny Monday, we left at 8:20, and true to the trainboard, had a drag race with PC's Chicago-bound *Riley*, also due out at 8:20 and with a similar consist: two E8's (ex-NYC), a baggage car, and two coaches—a shadow of the *Riley* I'd ridden from Chicago to Lafayette, Ind., in 1967.

Like the *Metropolitan*, No. 1 served as a local, with 12 stops (half "flags") in the 338 miles to St. Louis Union Station. The ride was pleasant and the crew friendly, again allowing Dutch-door privileges as I shot a freight meet in Indiana and some depots. To save two hours, my fiancée Carol drove down from Springfield to meet me at little Carlyle, Ill., a flag stop and the last one before the St. Louis area. The freight meet had cost us time, and we arrived 37 minutes down at 1:45. She and I drove the 85 miles north to Springfield and were home before 4 p.m., when GM&O No. 4, the *Limited*, my would-be connection, left St. Louis.

Comebacks

So, I'd gone 2,543 miles on five railroads through 10 states, netting eight new route segments. I'd fulfilled my D&H PA objective and added three Cincinnati lines. But what ultimately hap-



Friend (from a week before) *Buchanan County* carried N&W 3's markers (above) into Cincinnati. Our departure from CUT on B&O No. 1 (top) was the advertised drag race with PC's *Riley*.

pened to all the routes? Two are gone—virtually all the 200 miles of old PRR between Chicago and New Castle, Ind., and almost 200 miles of the B&O west from Clarksburg, W.Va.

But four routes came back under Amtrak. On the D&H, Buck Dumaine's successor, Bruce Sterzing, reinvigorated the idled PA's in May '72, and had them rebuilt. They hauled business trains, excursions, and then a new state-supported Amtrak *Adirondack* until March 1977, when new Turboliners displaced them. Amtrak ran its own *Shenandoah*, Washington-Cincy on the B&O, before CSX tore up the center segment. Amtrak's *Mountaineer*, and later the *Hilltopper*, burnished N&W rails through Roanoke for a time, and the *Capitol* returned to B&O out of Washington. But while CSX still runs the old B&O Cincinnati-St. Louis, that line has never seen a regular Amtrak train.

I spent one night at home, then took

IC No. 22, the *Governor's Special*, from Springfield to Homewood, where I'd left my car. More important, Chicago was *the* place to be for the once-in-a-lifetime experience of America's rail-passenger map being sliced in half. Sometime during what we called "Amtrak weekend," when photographing the first Amtrak Chicago departures and last arriving privately run trains, I ran into local friend Harold Edmonson. He'd been Associate Editor of *TRAINS* but just had been promoted to lead a new Kalmbach Publishing Co. books department. So *TRAINS* had an opening, and since I was between jobs, he encouraged me to contact Editor David P. Morgan. The rest, as they say, is history. I joined the *TRAINS* staff in late May. ■

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Want more car details? View the entire consists of the trains the author rode on his trip east at www.ClassicTrainsMag.com

Ghost train to Cleveland



SI Herring

On the eve of Amtrak, a first-class farewell to the New York Central passenger legacy

By William Benning Stewart

Befitting the day's upcoming events, February 20, 1971, dawned drizzly and cold in Indianapolis. By mid-morning 22 pilgrims, part of a rare sect honoring the final weeks of private-sector American passenger railroading, had made their way to Union Station, where they were delighted to see a time machine awaiting them on Track 8. No matter that almost all the great limiteds had been annulled or faced an uncertain future—when these travelers saw the lights of Pullman car *Castle Valley*, absorbed its enticing exterior tang of wet

stainless steel, fresh running-gear lubricants, and sauna-like steam, stepped up into its muffled comforts and inhaled the unmistakable aroma of regulation New York Central sleeping-car disinfectant, they were home again.

A decade before its role as a PC "ghost train," NYC 315 stands at Bellefontaine. The date is July 16, 1960, and the E7's still wear lightning stripes, but the train is already all mail and express cars with a single coach.

In one of the most unusual and now least-remembered special movements just prior to Amtrak, these travelers had made arrangements with Penn Central management in Philadelphia to have privately owned ex-NYC 10-roomette/6-double-bedroom car *Castle Valley* move in mail trains 316 and 315 from Indianapolis to Cleveland and return on that February weekend. The cheerful mood on the car belied the grim realities of the host railroad, successor to the once-great NYC and its former Pennsylvania Railroad nemesis for three years but now bankrupt for eight months. Passen-



ger trains, the source of much of PC's monetary malaise, were not celebrated by the company, as they had once been by NYC; proponents could only look ahead to Amtrak for salvation of a few remaining limiteds and look back with nostalgia at those already lost.

While other passenger-train devotees were setting up farewell trips on famous limiteds that would vanish on May 1, this impromptu junket on *Castle Valley* honored the heritage of one that had died three years earlier. NYC had long advertised its top New York–St. Louis flyer, the all-Pullman, extra-fare *Southwestern Limited*, as having “service and equipment identical with that of the *20th Century Limited*.” Certainly it had been the premier train on the Central’s former Big Four Cleveland–Indianapolis “Bee Line” until its customer base eroded in the 1950s and it gradually shrank in the mid-’60s. (Bee Line was a nickname dating to the joining of 19th century predecessors Indianapolis & Bellefontaine and Bellefontaine & Indiana.)

While the final run of the last remnant of the *Southwestern* had occurred in early 1968, fate conspired to keep another vestige of better times on the Bee Line. Trains 315 and 316 were the bones of the old *Cleveland Special*, once sleeper and dining car-equipped but still decidedly secondary to the *Southwestern*. In their now nameless status, 315 and 316 normally had a pair of E units, several baggage/storage mail cars, a few mail-filled Flexi-Van container flats, and a coach—the latter along for the ride only because PC had been repeatedly vexed in its discontinuance efforts.

With a 9:35 a.m. departure from Indianapolis and an overnight return from Cleveland, these little-known trains offered the friends of *Castle Valley* a last chance to ride and sleep in a New York Central Pullman racing at track speed along a former Big Four main line. Thanks to Indianapolis station master Ben Wesselman and other PC passenger officials, the railroad agreed to handle the car for a minimum of 18 first-class fares. And so began the unlikely last trip of a Pullman on what had been a segment of one of America’s premier passenger railroads.

Our hosts that morning were five veteran Bee Line trainmen: conductor Ray Whistler, engineer R. A. Nichols, fireman D. L. Foreman, brakeman R. J. Hughes Jr., and flagman Shod H. Dellacca. Joining Whistler and Dellacca in ex-NYC coach 2908, a matching Budd Co. product that likely had shared consists with *Castle Valley* over the years, were about a dozen PC



John Fuller

Ghost train waiting: Pullman *Castle Valley*, coach 2908, and a baggage car await train 316's locomotives at Indianapolis Union Station on the morning of Saturday, February 20, 1971.

trainmen deadheading to freight assignments. It wasn't long before 2908 was filled with cigarette smoke, questions about who was working what job, reminiscences of the old days, and agreement that the railroad on which they had hired out had gone straight to hell under bad management in New York and Philadelphia.

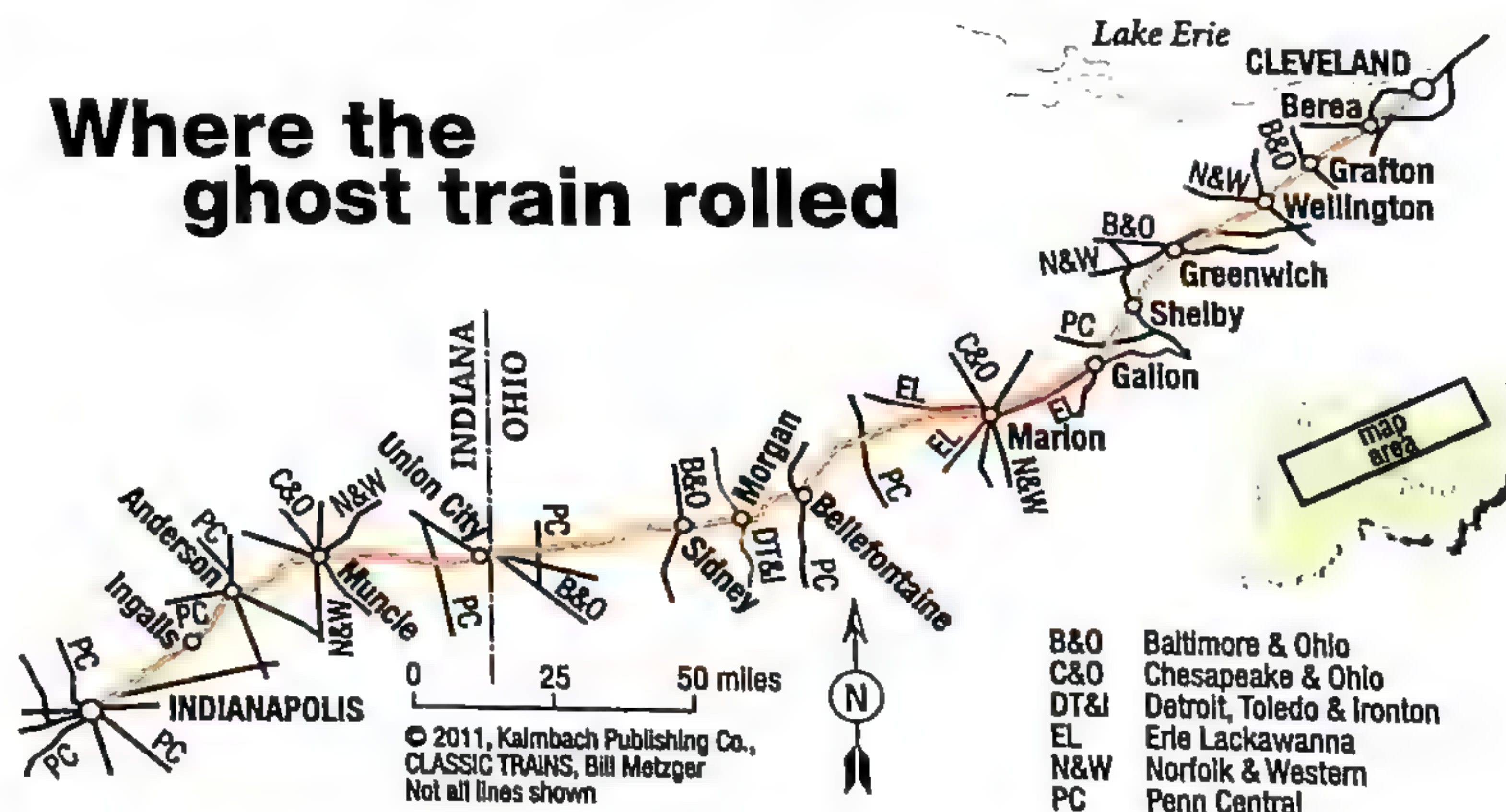
The mood on *Castle Valley* was brighter, at least at the beginning of the trip. When the vestibule end door closed with a reassuring *whoomph*, all fell silent around passengers suddenly surrounded by Pullman traditions. The hush was broken only by muffled conversations down the hall and an occasional *clank* from the steam heating. There was still the pleasant bounce provided by the burgundy fern-pattern carpeting, as well as the opportunity to freshen up at a polished stainless-steel sink and pat oneself dry with a starched towel proclaiming itself PROPERTY OF

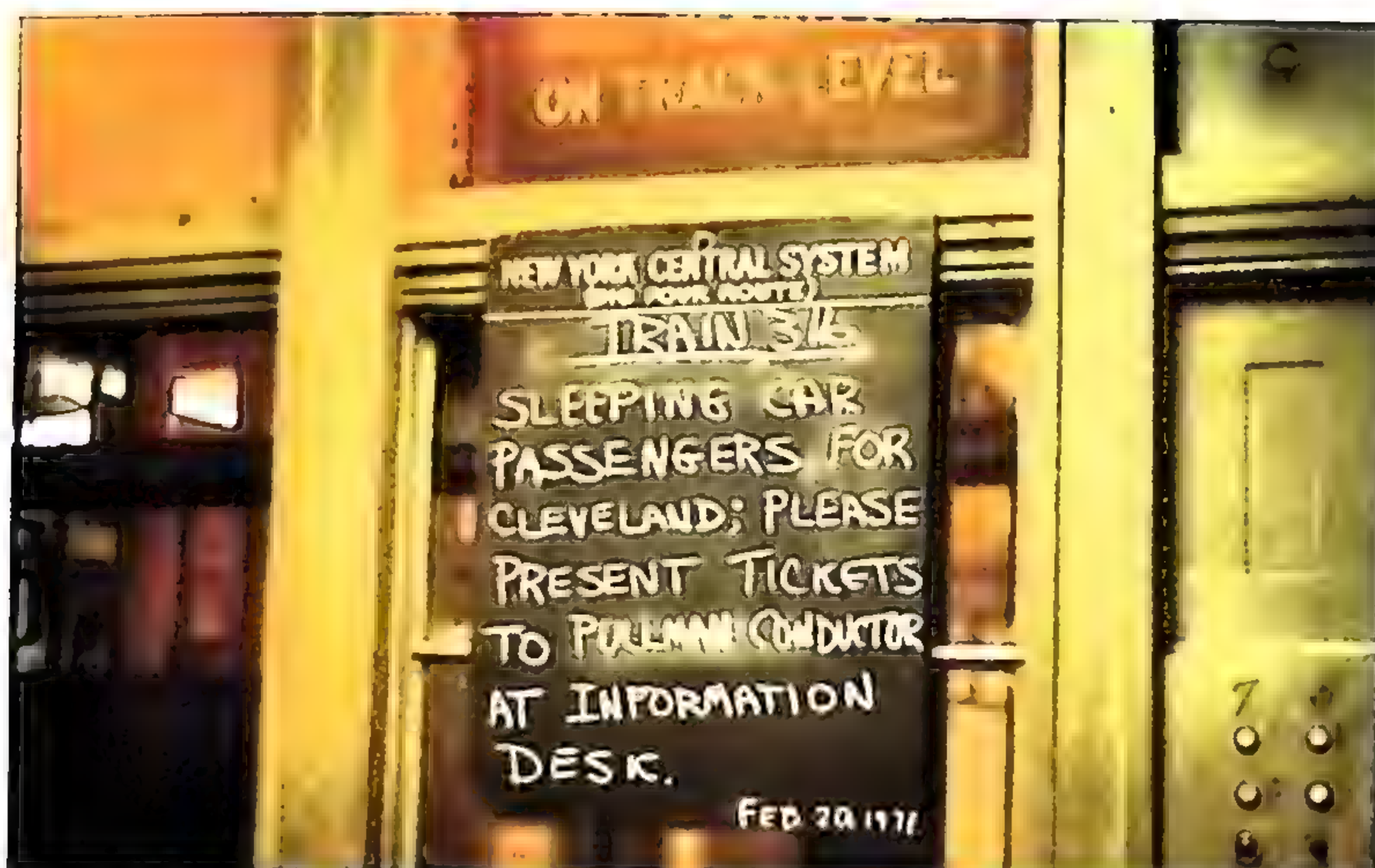
THE PULLMAN COMPANY before settling into an overstuffed seat in anticipation of the journey ahead.

The vehicle providing these sensory experiences was one of 40 *Valley*-series sleepers built during NYC's flurry of postwar passenger optimism, when the railroad spent almost \$60 million re-equipping its “Great Steel Fleet” with new lightweight cars. This series carried names ranging from the carrier-appropriate (*Mohawk Valley*), to the geographical (*Missouri Valley*), to the pastoral (*Meadow Valley*), to the light-hearted (*Happy Valley*). *Castle Valley* honored the mansion-lined Hudson River valley, arguably the most scenic part of NYC's famed Water Level Route.

Valley-series cars were regularly assigned to the *Southwestern Limited*; *Castle Valley* was no stranger to the Bee Line. But the car almost missed a happy ending: retired in 1968, it was stored without its water tanks being drained,

Where the ghost train rolled





John Fuller

The ancient Big Four gate sign at Indianapolis Union Station was an authentic artifact, but the message chalked by one of *Castle Valley's* patrons was strictly tongue-in-cheek.



John Fuller

In a steamy view from *Castle Valley's* vestibule at Morgan Tower, 316 crosses to Track 2 and clatters over the DT&I behind a long-hood-forward passenger GP9 and an E8, both ex-NYC.

resulting in extensive freeze damage to its plumbing. Rescuing the car a year later, its new owners spent weeks removing the concrete aisle floor and replacing the ruined plumbing. Now repaired and thoroughly cleaned inside and out, with a fresh air-brake-test stencil on its underside, the car was ready to resume its intended role. At 9:35 a.m. conductor Whistler waved a highball to the head end and *Castle Valley's* last dance across the Bee Line's steel ballroom floor began.

As 316 gained speed on the largely tangent, double-track main, most of its NYC regulation 127-lb. Dudley rail still good for 79-mph running, a hardy few

passengers took up posts in the vestibule. Ahead were a GP9 and an E8, a baggage car, and the ex-NYC coach; behind, an assortment of mail and express cars. Soon our train was roaring through towns with the velocity, if not the elegance, of its forbears, but no one seemed to notice. For those who knew what had passed before over these rails, No. 316 was now only a specter of trains departed—a ghost train to Cleveland.

The legacy of the *Southwestern Limited* dated to a consolidation of railroads that in 1889 created the Cleveland, Cincinnati, Chicago & St. Louis Railroad, popularly the "Big

Four." By 1895, the original *South-Western Limited* was carded as Nos. 11 and 12, magical digits whose mere mention would bring Big Four employees to attention for seven decades. By the World War I era, the service and equipment parallels with the *Century* had been established; when Nos. 25 and 26 received new cars, so did 11 and 12. In the 1920s that meant top-of-the-line steel heavyweights. In the late '30s it meant some of the *Central's* early, elegant streamlined equipment, including, in acknowledgment of Depression-era economics, coaches. In addition to its primary New York–St. Louis trade, the *Southwestern* also carried Boston–St. Louis Pullmans and coaches, making for lengthy consists west of Albany, N.Y.

The scale of the *Southwestern's* daily operations would be more than enough first-class service for many railroads, but in its heyday, passenger traffic on the Bee Line supported an entire fleet of trains. The *Knickerbocker* moniker of the Big Four's next-best train between Cleveland and St. Louis may have required explanation to some outside New York, but there was no misunderstanding names like the *Missourian*, the *Gateway*, and the *Cleveland Special*. All went about their business with an assortment of Pullmans, lounges, diners, coaches, and head-end cars. Still another tier of trains carried copious amounts of mail, express, and local passengers.

In its streamlined configurations, the *Southwestern* boasted teardrop observation cars like the prewar *Wabash River* and the postwar *Wingate Brook*; between them and the Hudsons or E units (and an occasional Alco PA) on the head end were such exotica as Budd twin-unit dining cars, *Harbor-series* 22-roomette cars, *Stream-series* sleeper-lounges, the regular *Valley* 10&6's and 2900-series coaches, even a streamlined Railway Post Office. Passengers dined from an extensive menu, relaxed in the lounge seating of attractive club cars, stretched lazily in reclining coach seats, and slept well in the care of attentive Pullman porters. Surely these were the *ne plus ultra* editions of Nos. 11 and 12, chic and refined conveyances that connected Grand Central Terminal and St. Louis Union Station through culture as well as commerce.

Years later, when I heard Frank Sinatra's performance of the famous Nelson Riddle arrangement of Cole Porter's "I've Got You Under My Skin," I made the comparison between the swinging cadence and smooth lyrics of the song and the sophisticated *Southwestern Limited* of my youth (love, after all, comes in many forms). The recording



Jay Williams

begins with a rolling saxophone-bass-piano track suggesting a long limited accelerating away from a running air test. Listening to Sinatra voice the core message of the song—"I've got you under my skin/I've got you deep in the heart of me/So deep in my heart that you're really a part of me"—I pictured myself at age 10, again departing Indianapolis Union Station on the *Southwestern* for New York, staring through a picture window aboard a *Valley*-series sleeper, watching the trio of lightning-striped E units ahead leading our train through the curves and switches at IU Tower. *This seat is where I want to sit and watch forever*, I thought at the time. "I'd sacrifice anything come what might/For the sake of havin' you near . . ."

In the midst of the recording the tempo picks up, suggesting a *Southwestern* engineer pulling back on the throttle, just as a hard-charging trombone solo replicates the effect of a freight slamming past on the other main. At its end the song eases to a perfect stop, as if arriving at a Grand Central bumping post. The hallmark of this mental meta-

Castle Valley conjures the spirit of the *Southwestern Limited* as train 316 rumbles over the big viaduct on the approach to Cleveland Union Terminal. Lattice towers were for CUT catenary.



John Fuller

As it had so many times before, *Castle Valley* awaits its guests at a CUT platform—but this time will be the last. The train's regular coach, also built by Budd, was a perfect match.



CLASSIC TRAINS collection

In 1925, during its all-Pullman heyday, the *Southwestern* poses behind two Big Four Pacifics northeast of Indianapolis. The lead engine, No. 6500, carries the train name on the tender.



Jay Williams collection

Brochure cover notwithstanding, standard Hudsons were regular *Southwestern* power in the 1930s and '40s. Capping the postwar edition were sleeper-obs cars like *Singing Brook*, the ideal vantage point for inspecting the Big Four speedway one day and the Hudson Valley the next.



William Benning Stewart collection

phor is the timely association of a splendid musical performance (recorded by Sinatra in January 1956, for his *Songs for Swingin' Lovers* album) with the disciplined transportation performance and lifestyle lessons offered by the *Southwestern Limited* that I came to know in the same era. Like the record itself, it all came to an end far too soon.

In 1930 no fewer than 14 daily passenger trains patrolled the Big Four between St. Louis and Cleveland; by 1961 there were only 4. In the postwar years Cleveland–St. Louis proved to be one of NYC's weaker passenger routes. Increasing numbers of St. Louis and Indianapolis travelers didn't see the point of going via Syracuse and Schenectady to midtown Manhattan, choosing instead either the Pennsylvania's more direct route—or much-faster air travel. Improved highways and automobiles began taking the remaining short-haul traffic. As early as 1957, NYC petitioned to end all passenger service west of Indianapolis, citing a 76 percent decline in

patronage since 1946 and an estimated annual loss of \$1.2 million. But another decade would pass before the *Southwestern* finally died of malnutrition.

That left Nos. 315 and 316, by then equally unloved by their owner but still running because of their daily consignments of mail, the source of 94 percent of their 1969 revenues of \$665,542. Passenger receipts amounted to a paltry \$34,484; the total count of paying riders was 4,736, a daily average of 5.3 aboard overnight No. 315 and 7.7 on daytime No. 316. After subtracting revenues from operating costs of \$962,731, the two trains represented an out-of-pocket loss in 1969 to Penn Central of \$297,189.

From our speeding vestibule perch that morning, we studied such intriguing sights as the paralleling, abandoned right of way of the Union Traction/Indiana Railroad interurban line, weaving in and out of lineside towns between Indianapolis and Muncie; the sleepy village of Ingalls, named

for onetime Big Four president Melville Ingalls but whose only remaining railroad structure was the former interurban station; and the sturdy red-brick Big Four depots at Anderson and Muncie. Another highlight was the dozen-plus Big Four towers on steel stilts, where operators still manhandled ancient interlocking plants, handed up orders, and stomped on company-telephone treadles to "OS" passing trains. At Morgan, semaphores that had known the smoke of fast-flying Big Four Pacifics still guarded the crossing of the Detroit, Toledo & Ironton. Hammering the B&O diamond at Shelby, we recalled the 1955 performance of NYC Extra 3005 East that gave rise to the classic David P. Morgan-Philip R. Hastings saga "The Mohawk that Refused to Abdicate" . . . first in September 1956 *TRAINS*, then in a 1975 Kalmbach book, and most recently, in 2009, in Volume II of *CLASSIC TRAINS' IN SEARCH OF STEAM* series.

The saddest sights of the day came at the desecrated division point of Belle-

fontaine, once an operations nerve center of the Big Four and home to three freight yards. Most of its former railroad property now sat idle. There was much more to be seen at Marion, 40 miles east, where the Bee Line crossed both Chesapeake & Ohio's Columbus-Toledo coal artery and Norfolk & Western's ex-PRR Columbus-Sandusky line before joining Erie Lackawanna's main line for 21 miles of joint trackage to Galion. During a brief stop at the boarded-up Big Four station in Galion, we examined an arrivals/departures chalkboard still lettered for the defunct *Southwestern* and *Knickerbocker* but, in an ironic twist, restenciled for Penn Central. At Grafton, No. 316 made an unscheduled stop, to check a warm journal on one of the Flexi-Van cars.

By now it was mid-afternoon, and a pleasant weariness had overtaken those of us who had spent most of the trip in the vestibule. After acknowledging the 1876 Berea depot and nearby BE Tower, junction with the NYC main line from Chicago, we reluctantly concluded the open-air portion of the eastbound journey and headed inside to freshen up. Through the gathering gloom we sped, the view outside now a blur of illuminated signs, congested highways, and busy businesses as urban scenery replaced rural on the last lap into Cleveland.

Union Terminal, as magnificent as ever, welcomed us as if we had just disembarked from the *Southwestern* itself. The sight of a tennis court in the concourse was unsettling, but the overall hustle and bustle of the place—travelers still in a hurry to be somewhere else—hadn't changed. As if we hadn't spent enough time above flanged wheels already, our evening plans called for further travel on a rapid transit PCC car, followed by dinner at a well-appointed restaurant in Shaker Heights. Afterward, a few of us got some unexpected exercise running to catch a trolley leaving for downtown. *Castle Valley*, turned and serviced, awaited our return in the depths of CUT. After making a cross-platform transfer from the trolley, most of our group retired to beds made up with authentic NYC linen and pillows and Pullman blankets.

Now it was late—and cold. Our conveyance back to Indianapolis, No. 315, was scheduled to depart at 11:50 p.m. But, in one final wrench of present-day reality, we learned that a connecting mail train from Buffalo was running behind schedule. More than an hour passed before the handoff of mail cars from it had been made, steam and air lines connected, and the highball fi-

nally given to the last sleeper-equipped train to traverse the Bee Line.

For some, though, the delay was a gift in disguise, because in contrast to its position in No. 316, *Castle Valley* now was the last car on the train. Those few of us still up and occupying the rear-facing vestibule soon would enjoy a magnificent nighttime panorama of downtown Cleveland as 315 slipped away from the platform. The floodlit tower of CUT stood watch as bursts of orange and red flashed from the third-shift workings of mills and factories lining the Cuyahoga River below. Catenary bridges from the former electrification sailed above our accelerating train, marking cadence as we marched toward the conclusion of our adventure.

Past Berea our speed picked up, and *Castle Valley*, hurtling through the night, offered its patrons the sensation of floating above the silver ribbons shining below. The last of the vestibule riders became absorbed in the experience, savoring it for mile after mile as we rushed through the early morning mists of northern Ohio. What had it been like, two decades earlier, to hear a hard-charging Hudson ahead, splitting the winter night with its chime whistle and rhythmic exhaust?

Somewhere around Wellington exhaustion overtook those last connoisseurs of the Bee Line legacy, and we retired to the Pullman accommodations that were one of the principal reasons for this odyssey. Oblivious to events between there and first light around the edges of my roomette shade near Fortville, about 20 miles short of Indianapolis, I can only report that *Castle Valley* succeeded in carrying us home in traditional Pullman safety and comfort.

Thirty minutes later we were again

alongside the Track 8 platform. *Castle Valley* quickly emptied its human cargo as passengers offered hasty good-byes. Minutes later, all was silent save for the menacing roar of a Boeing 727 passing overhead on final approach to the Indianapolis airport.

Porter and Sinatra had summed it up perfectly: "Don't you know, little fool, you never can win?/Why not use your mentality?/Step up, wake up to reality . . ." Pleasant though our 14-hour round-trip journey aboard *Castle Valley* had been, it was also proof that simply reutilizing historic hardware could recreate neither the high level of personal service once provided aboard it by the Pullman Company nor the distinctive, confident tone of the New York Central's first-class operations in which it once performed. The proud institution that was the source of some of the greatest memories of my life had now undeniably reached the end of its life, far too quickly for either of us.

As the depot switcher whisked *Castle Valley* away to its coachyard home, my thoughts turned to the span of the car's 21-year career. How many celebrities and near-celebrities had shared these rooms with everyday folk? What sorts of *Orient Express*-like mysteries had touched their lives? Beyond its normal assignments, to what special trains had this car been joined and to what other destinations had it traveled? How many times had its wheels been replaced, its interior paint freshened, its linen restocked?

For *Castle Valley* and countless other cars and trains from passenger railroading's proud past, those discussions had become inconsequential in the gray winter of early 1971. Now only the unknowns of Amtrak lay ahead, the glory years gone forever. ■



William Benning Stewart

On a September 1970 morning along the Bee Line in suburban Indianapolis, the E7's of Penn Central train 316—a ghost of long-vanished Big Four varnish—loom out of the fog.



Top, J. David Ingles; above, Monty Powell

Amtrak made a literal breakthrough (in Chicago) by introducing through Milwaukee–St. Louis trains in November 1971. The *Abraham Lincoln*, behind a GM&O E7 and a Milwaukee E9 (top), leaves Milwaukee June 3, 1972. The six French RTG Turboliners made a splash; running as Chicago–St. Louis train 301, a Turbo (above) stops in Bloomington, Ill., on October 11, 1973.

customer service “management” to the front lines. During 1971 and ’72, Amtrak hired a corps of energetic, but inexperienced, young people as Passenger Service Representatives (PSR’s) to ride long-distance trains out of New York, Chicago, Miami, and Los Angeles and to work as Passenger Service

Agents (PSA’s) in major stations.

I was among them. On the trains and in the stations, we were readily identifiable by our red jackets. When things went wrong, which happened frequently, station personnel or on-board crews were happy to point disgruntled passengers toward the “redcoat.”



Bruce Goldberg

Have a problem? The “redcoats” stood out!

Amtrak wrestled with big operational problems, but the company also was aggressive, introducing new trains, new routings, and trying new ways to conduct an old business. When new timetables came out, you never knew what you’d find. Consider some of the innovations in 1971-72: through coaches and sleepers from Boston to Florida; a second daily Chicago–Los Angeles train; short-haul trains running through Chicago Union Station; a transcontinental coach and sleeper via Kansas City.

Instead of snack cars, some Northeast Corridor trains gave passengers a chance to sit down to a full dining-car meal (which I regularly did on the Boston–Washington *Merchants Limited* during my 30-minute trip home from New York to Metropark, N.J.). In Penn Station, a passenger lounge was opened in former restaurant space on the lower level. To relieve confusion when boarding the Florida trains, check-in and issuance of boarding passes began in the main waiting room an hour before departure. (The end of this practice may have been hastened, in the name of labor peace, the day an inbound crew was late and two Amtrak PSA’s began collecting tickets without a conductor.) Refurbished cars presented a new



J. David Ingles

An early Amtrak innovation was the Chicago-L.A. *Chief*, on a 40-hour card opposite the *Super Chief*, shown westbound in Cajon Pass in June 1972. It lasted only until September.

image and received new interior configurations to test different service concepts, although mechanical issues still plagued them.

Amtrak took a more aggressive marketing approach, too. For the first time, rail tickets could be purchased with a general credit card. The first nationwide fare tariff was printed so agents all over would have the information they needed. A single phone number began to handle reservations in Chicago, and soon the nationwide 1-800-USA-RAIL toll-free line—still in use today—would be established nationwide.

A sense of mission

Besides the excitement of working for a new company, most of us also felt a sense of mission—to save the passenger train. There was an *esprit de corps*, exemplified by an anecdote from Warren Kalbacker, a Penn Station colleague. Working north on the *Silver Star*, he was standing in a Dutch door coming into Washington, and while passing Amtrak's headquarters, he saw employees on the upper floors—who had spotted his red coat—waving at him! Naturally, he waved back.

Although we became members of the "Amtrak family," we weren't always welcomed to the "railroad family." At Penn Station, many PC employees saw us redcoats as a threat to their jobs; few saw Amtrak as the last opportunity to save what was left.

Seaboard Coast Line folks were among the most helpful, not surprising since SCL remained so pro-passenger that it seriously considered not joining



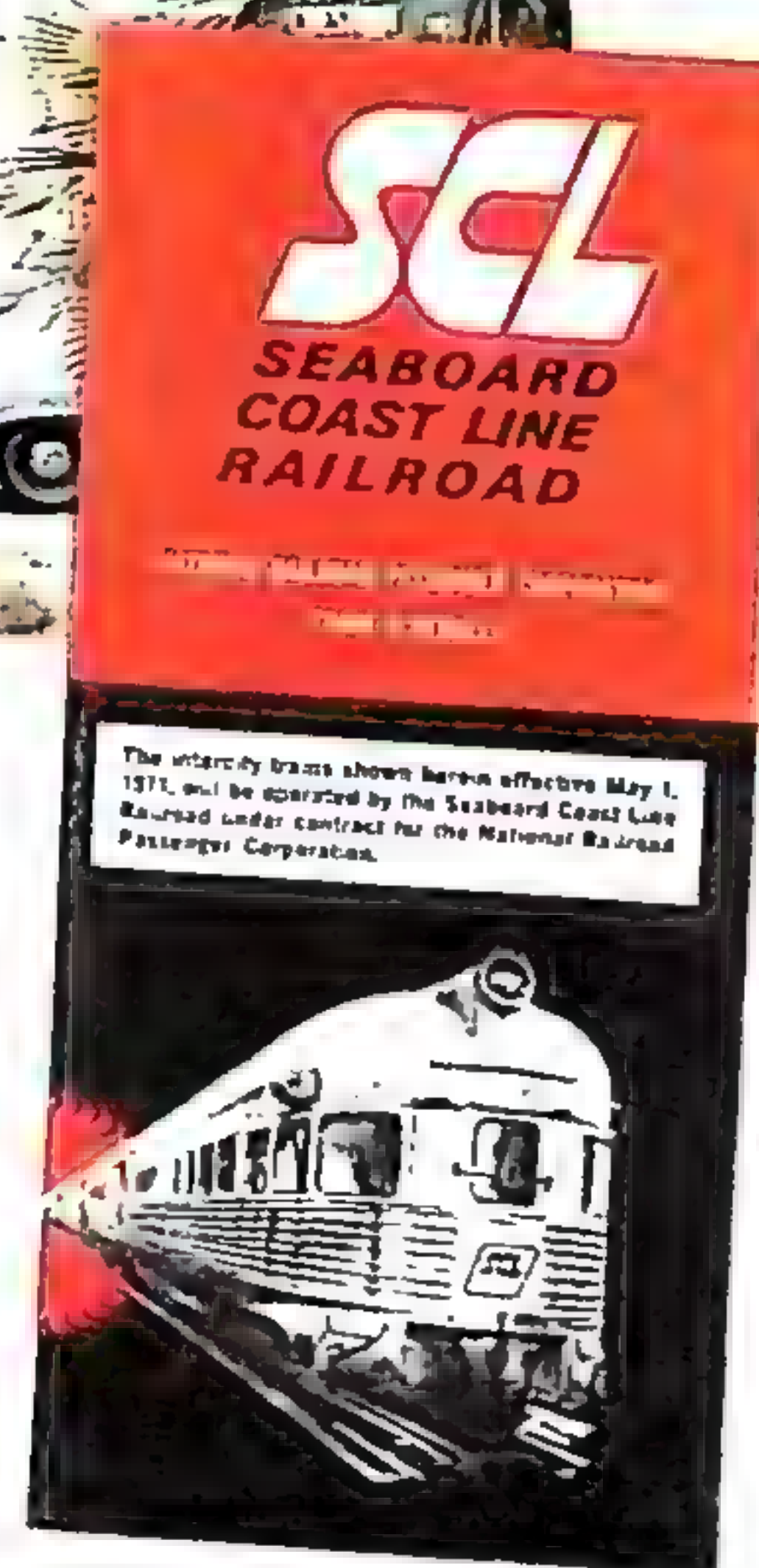
Top, J. David Ingles; above, Charles B. Porter; timetable, author's collection

SCL, whose *Everglades* for Jacksonville, Fla., clears Alexandria, Va. (top), in April 1971 on RF&P, was a reluctant Amtrak joiner. It even issued its own initial timetable for "operating under contract" NRPC trains (right). By April 1973 (above), a lot of Amtrak's 197 E units were repainted; this is ex-SCL E8 524 (*née* FW&D 9981A), at Clearwater, Fla.

Amtrak. We PSA's operated from the SCL office on Penn Station's lower level; SCL provided station customer service for the three daily Florida trains, and also staffed the trains with a passenger agent (paid by Amtrak) all the way to Florida. The SCL veterans told us not only what we needed to know about the railroad, but also taught us "the code"—little tricks to cut through resistance and the regimented railroad culture.

Besides handling unhappy passengers who discovered Amtrak's advertising was better than its product, we developed a routine of being on the platform for certain arrivals and departures. *Metroliner* service dated from only 1969, but it was Amtrak's most important product in both image and revenue generation. Although the service was usually trouble-free, one of us was always on the platform, just in case.

The overnight streamliners out of New York also got our attention. We walked each train after it was spotted at the platform, checking for problems, and made sure each was stocked with timetables, postcards, and stationery. The three Florida trains still enjoyed a robust market of snowbirds in winter and Orlando attraction traffic in summer, and ran 15 to 18 cars. The *Silver Meteor* to Miami was the leader with two diners, a video-equipped mid-train lounge, a sleeper lounge [including the ex-Seaboard Sun Lounges—see *DREAM TRAINS 2*, 2010] and mostly refurbished equipment. The *Champion* to Tampa and St. Petersburg lacked the *Meteor's* amenities and had a slower schedule, but it carried large crowds to





Orlando and Florida's Gulf Coast. The *Silver Star* was the workhorse, with coaches, sleepers, a diner, and a lounge, but as the day's first Florida train from the Northeast, it was popular.

The *Montrealer* began operating in September 1972 from Washington and immediately became a popular way to reach Vermont ski resorts. Its "Le Pub" lounge, which had a piano and a weekend entertainer, exuded *après-ski*. The *National Limited* to Pittsburgh, St. Lou-

is, and Kansas City, on the other hand, exuded all the wrong things—the least desirable equipment, poor on-time performance, and only a lone diner-lounge to visit on the scheduled 27-hour run. A journal entry by Warren Kalbacker for August 2, 1972, states, "Sent out a #31 not fit for human habitation." Unfortunately, that was not rare.

Southern Railway did not join Amtrak, but at Penn Station, we added to a Boston-Washington train well-main-

tained through coaches and sleepers for its *Southern Crescent* to New Orleans.

Our Florida trains were the strongest long-distance revenue-producers out of New York, but the *Broadway Limited* to Pittsburgh and Chicago was the chosen star of the fleet—perhaps by necessity. By late 1971, yellow Union Pacific cars, stainless-steel SCL stock, and red-striped Southern Pacific sleepers had come east to replace the worn-out PC equipment, and soon Amtrak



David C. Warner; brochure, author's collection

The *Silver Meteor* and *Silver Star* have remained premier Amtrak services. On April 19, 1977, the southbound *Star* rolls into Kissimmee, Fla., behind three-year-old SDP40F's.

SILVER METEOR FEATURES

Amtrak welcomes you to the nation's SILVER METEOR with new schedules, improved equipment, new ideas, new trains — all designed for fun vacations.

HERE IS YOUR ITINERARY HEADING SOUTH

3:00 pm	Leave New York, New York City
3:30 pm	Arrive Washington, D.C.
4:00 pm	Leave Washington, D.C.
4:30 pm	Arrive Baltimore, Md.
5:00 pm	Leave Baltimore, Md.
5:30 pm	Arrive Philadelphia, Pa.
6:00 pm	Leave Philadelphia, Pa.
6:30 pm	Arrive New York, New York City

HERE IS YOUR ITINERARY HEADING NORTH

3:00 pm	Leave New York, New York City
3:30 pm	Arrive Washington, D.C.
4:00 pm	Leave Washington, D.C.
4:30 pm	Arrive Baltimore, Md.
5:00 pm	Leave Baltimore, Md.
5:30 pm	Arrive Philadelphia, Pa.
6:00 pm	Leave Philadelphia, Pa.
6:30 pm	Arrive New York, New York City

Get the fun and excitement at home and order the brochure. If you're away, you'll enjoy the fun and excitement at the Silver Meteor. A booklet and Passenger Service Agent will be on hand to meet you with your board of seats.



Robert P. Schmidt

MoPac E8's, having taken over for PC E8's at St. Louis, ease the New York-K.C. *National Limited* into Kirkwood, Mo., January 2, 1972.

applied its red-white-and-blue livery to the newcomers, a cosmetic if not mechanical refurbishing. By Amtrak's first anniversary, the *Broadway* was running with all-redone consists, pulled by silver-and-red GG1's and E8's. Dinner in the diner was still special, and it was not unheard of for New York day-shift PSA's to hop on board to North Philadelphia after work to enjoy the featured \$3.60 rib-eye dinner.

The train's 4:55 p.m. departure during the height of rush hour still had a special aura. Train announcer Dan Simmons' calls for the *Broadway* always had some panache, carrying a tone of greater importance than the rapid-fire barkings for PC's Trenton locals and North Jersey Coast runs, or Amtrak's Philadelphia "Clockers" and Washington conventional trains, and even the *Metroliners*. Amazing by today's standards, Amtrak ran the *Broadway* with just two trainsets, turning the cars in seven hours (or less time when late) in both New York and Chicago following its 17-hour overnight run.



Art Peterson, Krambles-Peterson archive; timetable, author's collection

With Amtrak emblems replacing the PC "mating worms," coach 810 leads four-car *Metroliner* 113 into Metropark, N.J., August 25, 1974.

Variety was the bane of life

During the early years, Amtrak trains featured a dizzying array of equipment. Leg-rest coaches, previously uncommon east of Chicago, became a fixture nationwide on overnight trains. It was not unusual to see 44-seat UP or SP coaches mixed with 52-seat non-leg-rest SCL cars. The inherited long-distance coaches had two large restroom lounges, giving passengers a roomy place to wash and change clothes.

Unlike today's Viewliner and Superliner sleepers, standardization was not a hallmark of the inherited fleet. While 10-roomette/6-double-bedroom cars were most common, there were also 10&5's, 11-bedroom cars, a 7-bedroom/2-drawing-room car, and two Slumber-coach groups of different capacity. The *Broadway* had ex-Rock Island 8&6's that were refurbished and given names related to New York, Pittsburgh, and Chicago such as *Central Park*, *Golden Triangle*, and my favorite, *Wrigley Field*. On occasion we saw Canadian National sleepers with open sections (berths with curtains) on the *Montrealer*, replacing a defective Amtrak car that had to be repaired in Montreal.

"Conventional" Northeast Corridor trains (i.e., locomotive-hauled train, not Metroliner M.U.'s) were not all that uniform either. Before the Amfleet cars arrived in 1975, NEC trains sported a mix of former Pennsy *Congressional* coaches ("Congos"), New York Central coaches off the New York-Albany-Buffalo "Empire Service," and an occasional pinch-hitting long-distance coach or lounge. Most cars had seen better days.

Almost every Corridor conventional train had a parlor car, ranging from former PRR Congo parlors with 29 swivel seats and a drawing room to a

variety of New Haven styles, including baggage-parlors and a few 39-seat cars with a two-and-one seating configuration that would become standard on the Amfleet "Am-clubs." One pair of parlor cars on the popular Philadelphia-New York-Springfield, Mass., *Ban-ners* had been refurbished with living-room-type seating.

Whenever a newly refurbished car came through Penn Station, it gave us PSA's reason for hope. It was late August 1972 when the first completely refurbished NEC train came through, and it looked great. Alas, its snack-bar coach, 3952, was dead with no lights or air-conditioning! Hope for the future versus the reality of the present—such was Amtrak in the early 1970s.

For the mechanical department, the non-standardized or "rainbow" fleet caused parts distribution nightmares. It was impossible to have all critical parts for literally hundreds of different car varieties everywhere on the system, often making it impossible to fix problems away from a car's home maintenance base. The variety caused issues. I have more than a few memories of being surrounded by angry customers and a frustrated car attendant of a sold-out Florida train who found that instead of the assigned 10&6 sleeper, an all-bedroom car had been substituted. This made it impossible to give everyone their reserved accommodation.

National Railroad
Passenger Corporation
train schedules

New York
Philadelphia
Washington

Charles Shaw May 1, 1977

The identity of this train set is confirmed by the Penn Central Railroad and the National Railroad Passenger Corporation.





J. David Ingles; timetables, author's collection

Amtrak's "chosen star," the *Broadway Limited*, was targeted for the first total cosmetic makeover by May 1, 1972, but on May 21st, two unrepaired UP cars dent the "all-Amtrak look" as No. 40 leaves Chicago. Former B&O sleeper-lounge *Dana* adorns the rear, and in the old PRR coach yard, some ex-N&W cars, including a *Blue Bird* dome coach, await repainting.

supposed to make a *Silver Star* trip to Miami with an SCL passenger agent to see how the railroad vets handled customer-service issues, including coordination with the conductor when problems arose with seating assignments.

Fond memories from these trips are what stick with many of us four decades later, overshadowing memories of frustration in trying to get perpetually defective equipment fixed, handle irritated passengers, and keep our sanity while doing so. Among them: Watching the front end of the *Broadway* loop around Horseshoe Curve from the 18th car, former B&O 5-bedroom/observation-lounge *Dana* on the rear; seeing the Coast Guard sailing ship *Eagle* berthed in New London, Conn., the lights glowing in its rigging as the *Merchants* paused at the station; hitting a Sunshine State platform from the *Star* after dawn, the sun having just risen, and smelling that warm Florida air.

We would see notable people pass through Penn Station. William F. Buckley, Chief Justice Warren Burger, the Baltimore Orioles, and Australian tennis pro Yvonne Goolagong were among those who boarded *Metroliners*. Soviet diplomats going between New York and Washington preferred private drawing rooms on conventional parlor cars. On

the *Broadway* we saw singer Ella Fitzgerald; Martha Mitchell, wife of attorney general John Mitchell; composer Dmitri Shostakovich; and comedian Jack Benny, who was on the train from Chicago after a storm closed O'Hare.

There were occasional special trains. For President Nixon's second inauguration, three 18-car specials of ex-New Haven coaches were chartered by The Women's Strike for Peace. The steam heat was no match for the day's bitter cold, though, and within a half hour, all three trains were rolling refrigerators and the passengers sounded anything but peaceful! My two colleagues and I, each aboard one of the trains, understood their anger—we were cold too.

Warren Kalbacker remembers his passenger agent training trip on the *Silver Star*. "On the trip back, the situation just kept deteriorating. First one coach went hot and dark, then another, and another. What do you do when there's nowhere to put people? I felt like giving away airline tickets. Ironical, since on the trip down, I had torn from the bulkhead of a Congo coach in the consist an ad for TWA's new service to Florida! A few months later on the *Broadway*, we had a coach that was so cold I had to help a mother move to a warmer car by carrying her baby."

It's possible that the first "gasoline crisis," in 1973, helped save Amtrak, as our ridership exploded. Rather than risk being unable to fill their tank on a trip, or pay airfares that were rapidly rising in step with fuel costs, people turned to the train. To its credit, Amtrak, even with a threadbare network, wasn't shy about promoting itself as a driving alternative.

To Chicago, Boston, Miami

Although our group was assigned to Penn Station, we often got to substitute for an ill or vacationing PSR on the *Broadway* to Chicago or on a two-day loop to Washington on a *Metroliner*, then up to Boston and back to New York the next afternoon on the refurbished *Merchants Limited*. We all were

Chicago comparisons

Chicago, as the hub for most of Amtrak's long-distance network, had a large PSR base that covered the *City of San Francisco* (now *California Zephyr*), the *Empire Builder*, the *Super Chief* (now *Southwest Chief*), the *Broadway*, and the *Floridian*. Scott Hercik, an early Chicago PSR, remembers the contrasts provided by two of those trains.

"Even though the Santa Fe eventually withdrew permission for Amtrak to use the *Super Chief* name, saying the train didn't live up to Santa Fe standards, I thought the train was exemplary. The crews still took great pride in providing the best possible service, the equipment was classic Santa Fe, and generally everything worked fine all the way from Chicago to Los Angeles and back," Hercik recalls. "The train included the private Turquoise Room in the dining car, the epitome of class. It just didn't get any better than that train."

At the other end of the spectrum was the Chicago-Miami *Floridian*. Hercik's strategy? "The only way to survive trips on the *Floridian* was to treat each as an adventure. It seemed like each time you were assigned to it, the train was on a new schedule. Two days and one night en route, next time two nights and one day. You never knew if you'd be detoured somewhere in Indiana due to deteriorated track. You knew, though,

that by the end of the run, the heating or 'a/c' would fail in several of the cars."

Like most of the Chicago PSR's, Hercik was in a *Floridian* derailment. Many occurred at slow speed, but Hercik recalls going on the ground in Indiana at about 60 mph. The two SDP40F diesels stayed on the rails, but all the cars derailed. "I was sitting in the lounge car when suddenly my Coke was flying toward the ceiling, which was off to my left! Thankfully nobody was hurt too badly," he remembers. "It was just another *Floridian* adventure."

In those years, Amtrak employees traveling on business were expected to use the train, at least one way, even cross-country. Hence for me, a 1974 training session in Spokane, Wash., meant several days of riding the *Broadway*, the *North Coast Hiawatha* to Seattle, and then back to Spokane on the *Expo 74*, an Amtrak entrepreneurial effort to capitalize on the world exposition in that city—although the train's schedule certainly didn't seem optimal. It was the first of a dozen cross-country trips for me that eventually covered all

the coast-to-coast routes. To this day, the images of descending the mountain into Butte, Mont., remain vivid.

The drum

The trains were not the only "classic" thing at Amtrak in those days. So was the reservation and ticketing system. Hidden from the public behind the Penn Station ticket office was one of several reservation offices. Each office controlled the reserved space on certain trains, so, unlike today, it was not unusual for an agent to have to "wire for space" from another reservation office, just as the individual railroads had to do in pre-Amtrak days.

Metroliner reservations and tickets were handled by a rudimentary computerized system, but for everything else there was "the drum." In a set-up similar to that pictured in Summer 2010 CLASSIC TRAINS [pages 72-73], about two dozen agents sat around a two-tiered metal carousel, about 15 feet in diameter with numerous compartments on each tier that held decks of cardstock diagrams showing the accommodations in each parlor car,



Art Peterson photo, Krambles-Peterson archive; bumper sticker, author's collection

As seen from a SEPTA M.U. car, a typical "conventional" (non-*Metroliner*) Northeast Corridor train, the *East Wind* from Boston, is D.C.-bound near Brill Tower in Philadelphia August 28, 1974, behind PC GG1 4932. A 1975 bumper sticker featured a GE P30 diesel and Amfleet cars.



Top, Joseph H. Hunter; above, David C. Warner

The *Empire Builder* is a rolling billboard for Burlington Northern and predecessors as it curves through Pewaukee, Wis. (top), on October 16, 1971. On September 14, 1973, the *City of San Franciscos* meet in Cheyenne, Wyo. New Amtrak No. 457 (silver block) adorns 5's second unit.

sleeper, and reserved coach on trains for which New York controlled space.

The drum rotated about once a minute, and agents kept callers on the phone until the diagrams for the desired train reached the agent's position. The agent would remove the diagrams, find space in one of the coaches or sleepers, write the reservation information on the card, and then on the next drum rotation, return the diagrams to their slot so another agent could access that train. Among the information in each entry were the passenger's name, origin, destination, and identification for the agent who had made the booking. Remember earlier when the SCL people taught us "the code"? When it came to reservations on the Florida trains, the code of "NP2800" assured that even if your pass didn't allow it, the conductor would not question your occupying a bedroom suite!

Amtrak's first attempt at a computerized reservation system involved trains for which Chicago controlled the space. The New York "res" office had just one computer terminal to access the Chicago-controlled trains. The "system" was

just an electronic diagram, so the agent still had to search for an open space. At least with the computer, it became impossible to assign a Pittsburgh-New York customer a seat occupied by a Chicago-Harrisburg rider who still had 250 miles to go when the train stopped in Pittsburgh. Nothing prevented this type of error on the paper diagrams.

Moving on

Amtrak's early years were a time to decide if you wanted a railroad career, and if so, begin preparing for the next step. At first, Amtrak was more of a management organization than an operator. The railroads still ran the trains, which was often evident. My *Silver Star* familiarization trip was cancelled because a snafu had resulted in my not yet receiving my Amtrak pass. Without it, the railroad conductor could tell me to pay a fare or get off, even though I was working for Amtrak and in uniform. When we traveled on business, since the diners were run by the railroads and not Amtrak, we had to pay for our meals and get reimbursed.

In time, Amtrak began taking over

functions from the railroads, and opportunities for advancement mushroomed. In my first year with Amtrak, I saw Penn Station peers move into customer service management, the mechanical department, on-board services, and become quality control "service inspectors" traveling all over the East inspecting trains and stations.

After 10 months at Penn, I was offered a service inspector position. Less than a year later, I moved to headquarters when Amtrak took over the mail, baggage, and express operations from the railroads. (Personally, it was a good move but bad timing—I got the new job right after renting an apartment in New Jersey, and a week before my wedding.) After a year in Washington I was off to Baltimore as a general supervisor, and then to manage the mail and baggage operation when Amtrak took over the Northeast Corridor from PC in 1976. In the early years, the only constant for those staying with the growing company was a parade of new opportunities.

For others, growing up with Amtrak proved a springboard. Hercik became director of rail operations for the State of Michigan, went back to Amtrak years later, and now is the transportation and international trade coordinator for the Appalachian Regional Commission. Kalbacker left to pursue a successful freelance writing career, but his Amtrak roots still show when he takes the *Lake Shore Limited* from New York to Chicago to visit his editor.

After five years, I used my Amtrak experience to get an analytical position at the Civil Aeronautics Board that proved to be a springboard back into Amtrak's marketing department. In a way, I came full circle as I ended up being responsible for revenue and ridership development on the same Northeast Corridor and overnight East Coast trains on which I'd first learned the passenger railroad business.

From the beginning, everyone felt that new equipment would be the key to Amtrak's success. Indeed, the Amfleet in the East and the Superliners in the West set the stage for what were probably Amtrak's glory days. When my colleagues and I joined Amtrak in the early '70s, the future of the passenger train was still in doubt, but by the mid-'80s Amtrak had become an integral part of the U.S. travel landscape. With the fleet consisting of equipment either built, or

More on our website

For detailed rosters of the cars and locomotives Amtrak acquired from member railroads, first published in *TRAINS* in the early 1970s, go to www.ClassicTrainsMag.com



David C. Warner

Some roads wouldn't sell Amtrak their newer passenger diesels, but the units, under lease, served the national passenger carrier for several years. Two SP SDP45's are still the *Coast Starlight's* normally assigned power on August 8, 1973, as No. 14 heads north near Concepcion, Calif.

rebuilt, under Amtrak, ridership grew and service reliability got up to levels the first group of Amtrak executives could have only dreamed about.

Now, as Amtrak turns 40, there's a bit of *déjà vu*. Amtrak's car fleet that was new in the late 1970s and '80s is now older than the 1,200-car fleet Am-

trak selected in 1971. Even the *Acela Express* trains are said to have reached the midpoint of their lifespan. But despite problems caused by aging equipment, better times may be coming. The federal seed money for a new high-speed and intercity rail program holds some hope, just as the *Metroliners* and

Amtrak did four decades ago, of a new era for U.S. intercity passenger rail service. And now just as then, there will be a new group of young people who will have the same chance we did 40 years ago, to grow their careers as they continue America's long history with the passenger train. **I**



Refurbished Amfleet business-class coach 21708 Interior, Amtrak; brochures, author's collection

The 492 Amfleet cars in 1975-76 marked the true emergence of Amtrak as "its own railroad."



Disbanding the tribe

The men who had made Santa Fe's passenger trains among the best in the nation took care to protect the legacy of the famous fleet of *Chiefs*

By John W. Barriger IV



Fred G. Gurley



Ernest S. Marsh



John S. Reed

Three photos, Santa Fe

By the 1950s, the Santa Fe Railway was among the leaders—many would say *the* leader—of North American rail passenger service. The premier members of the fleet were three Chicago-Los Angeles trains—the all-bedroom, extra-fare *Super Chief*; the all-coach, extra-fare *El Capitan*; and the *Chief*—plus the *San Francisco Chief* and the *Texas Chief*. These were backed up by a host of limiteds and locals on main and branch lines that required a 38-page entry in the 1954 *Official Guide*. The top trans-continental trains were equipped with immaculately maintained stainless-steel cars pulled by diesels dressed in the famous Warbonnet livery. Most of this equipment had been acquired during the 1944–57 presidency of Fred G. Gurley, who was deeply committed to continuing his road's long tradition of

sterling passenger service. Under his leadership, the road acquired more than 600 cars, including 48 revolutionary double-deck “Hi-Level” coaches, diners, and lounges developed with the Budd Co. for the *El Capitan*.

In the mid-1960s, when many railroads were doing all they could to exit the passenger business, Gurley's successor Ernest S. Marsh kept the faith. Though Marsh discontinued many marginal or money-losing runs, he upheld the quality of the top trains. The

Santa Fe received 24 more Hi-Level coaches from Budd in 1964 and 10 FP45 diesels from Electro-Motive in '67; they would be the road's last new passenger equipment acquisitions.

John S. Reed, another staunchly pro-passenger Santa Fe man, assumed the presidency in 1966—just before the bottom fell out. Revenues for the first 8 months of 1967 plummeted by 17.3 percent; that fall, the Post Office pulled nearly all mail off the nation's passenger trains. For the Santa Fe, this meant a loss of \$35 million in annual income, a sum Reed termed “the backbone of our passenger trains.” He announced that the road would seek to discontinue all service except for the *Super Chief* and *El Capitan* (which ran as a combined train except for during busy travel periods), the *San Francisco Chief*, the *Texas Chief*, and a handful of L.A.-San Diego trains. The Santa Fe was reluctantly coming to the conclusion that the



Mourners gather around the last Santa Fe Super Chief/El Capitan to depart Chicago. Tomorrow's train would be Amtrak's, and would leave from Union Station, not Dearborn.



Harold A. Edmonson

day of long-distance business travel by train, as well as most recreational train travel, was coming to an end.

During the winter of 1970–71, Ernest Marsh, who was then Chairman, and President John Reed directed me as head of Staff Studies & Planning to make a thorough study of Santa Fe's passenger operations to determine whether or not we should join Amtrak. I presented our conclusions at the April board meeting in our Chicago headquarters. I estimated that by 1972 our annual passenger losses would reach \$70 million—which was about our total annual income in those days. By contrast, I calculated the cost for us to join Amtrak would be more than \$30 million—a substantial sum, to be sure, but a one-time payment that would relieve us of hundreds of millions in future deficits. My recommendation was for Santa Fe to join Amtrak.

Present at that meeting was Fred Gurley, whose improvements to the Santa Fe during the 1940s and '50s were legendary. In addition to his support of passenger service, he was responsible for dieselization, much double-tracking, curve and grade reductions, heavier rail, longer sidings, and centralized traffic control. By then Gurley was retired, but retained a position as an honorary director. In this capacity, he attended meetings, asked questions, and gave opinions, but could not vote.

At that meeting, Gurley asked the most in-depth questions and really led the discussion until it came time to vote. The board voted in favor of Santa Fe becoming a member of Amtrak. Afterwards, Gurley asked me if I would come to his apartment for lunch sometime to discuss my recommendations further.

Ten days later I was at Gurley's apartment in a Mies van der Rohe–designed building overlooking Lake Michigan.

He questioned me for more than two hours, and I thoroughly enjoyed telling him in detail about our investigations. He was particularly interested in the disposition of the Santa Fe's passenger cars because of his personal involvement in their design and purchase.

I told Gurley that we would be selling the equipment in the next few months. My preliminary discussions indicated that Amtrak had a strong desire to purchase the 72 Hi-Level cars and our 14 full-length dome cars. However, the new corporation was not interested in our old heavyweight cars, or in our lightweights that were equipped with steam-activated air conditioning.

Most of the Santa Fe's low-level cars used steam-activated a/c. This system, which employed a complex, steam-ejector-induced vacuum, was well suited for trains that cycled between needing cooling and needing heat two or three times during a single trip—as ours



Streamliner curtain calls

On the Southern and the Rio Grande, the traditions of the great trains lasted beyond May 1

By Karl Zimmermann

On May 1, 1971, when Amtrak was born, most American railroads that previously had operated long-distance passenger trains breathed a sigh of relief. All they had to do was join, pay a fee (part of which they could recoup by selling rolling stock to Amtrak), and then say goodbye forever to passenger-train-generated red ink. There were, however, a few mavericks.

Six railroads eligible to join Amtrak—the Denver & Rio Grande Western, Southern Railway, Rock Island, South Shore Line, Reading Company, and Georgia Railroad—said “Thanks, but no thanks,” each for its own reasons. These decisions to say no, particularly those by Southern and Rio Grande, offered some tasty opportunities for the tradition-minded rail traveler to experience a few more rail journeys in pre-Amtrak style. Being of that ilk, I cashed in more than once.

When Amtrak was lining up its routes, one of the most coveted was a variation on the old *California Zephyr*’s, to run on the Burlington Northern from Chicago to Denver, the Rio Grande on to Ogden, Utah, then the Southern Pacific (rather than the original CZ’s Western Pacific) to Oakland. This would have created a through train via Ogden, replacing the across-the-platform transfer to SP’s *City of San Francisco* that had been in effect since a tri-weekly train—

called “California Service” by BN and *Rio Grande Zephyr* on the D&RGW—had replaced the *California Zephyr* in March 1970, when WP had been given permission to discontinue its leg of the train.

In late winter 1971, Amtrak inked in a reborn *California Zephyr* traveling over the Rio Grande, with all the wonderful Colorado and Utah mountains and rivers and canyons that implied. Then negotiations hit a snag, with the railroad objecting to some of the terms of Amtrak’s standard contract. In particular, the D&RGW was unwilling to cede the right to control passenger operations over its mountainous, scenic, single-track line. “Scenic” probably made the railroad as nervous as “single-track,” since it was not entirely unreasonable for the Rio Grande to fear that Amtrak would want to run more trains over a line that many travelers would rate as America’s most beautiful. Certainly the expectation that the tri-weekly service it would be obligated to continue could be upped to daily was plausible.

Perhaps the realization that Union

Pacific, D&RGW’s well-endowed, multi-track competitor to the north, seemed to be getting away scot-free rankled. And the \$1.6 million Rio Grande would be required to pay to join Amtrak was a further disincentive. At the 11th hour—April 26, specifically—negotiations broke down. Amtrak’s *California Zephyr*, almost immediately renamed the *City of San Francisco* and by summer 1972 the *San Francisco Zephyr*, would run its central leg over the UP, heading north from Denver to Cheyenne, and then on to Ogden.

This move of the Rio Grande’s was unpopular, particularly in Colorado, where press and citizenry alike deplored the lack of through service. While the Ogden and Denver departure times were coordinated with the arrival of Amtrak connections in those cities, D&RGW’s longer, slower route caused a substantial misconnect at the other end.

A Grande ride on the RGZ

Whatever the merits or demerits of the Rio Grande’s decision, for me and like-minded others it was surely a cloud that had a silver lining, and I enjoyed multiple rides aboard this stainless-steel time machine before, on April 24, 1983, the Rio Grande finally joined Amtrak. I’d known the *California Zephyr* well, but my first encounter with the *Rio Grande Zephyr* didn’t come until August 13, 1974, when—with my wife,



D&RGW train 17, the *Rio Grande Zephyr* for Salt Lake City, climbs toward Soldier Summit west of Kyune, Utah, in September 1977.



The *Southern Crescent* is about 30 miles into its New Orleans–Washington run as it crosses Lake Pontchartrain on an April 1978 morning.



Hoang Chi Cook

Seen from inside diner *Silver Banquet* in 1976, the customary F9A-F9B-F9B set leads the *RGZ* toward the Big Ten curves above Denver.



Karl Zimmermann

Tour groups could swell the *RGZ's* consist to as many as 10 cars, as was the case on author Zimmermann's first ride, in August 1974.

Laurel, and our young daughters, Jennifer and Emily—I boarded the train at the stately D&RGW depot in Salt Lake City, Denver-bound. The consist that day was entirely unexpected: 10 cars in all, roughly twice as long as usual.

From the rear: the gem, Vista-Dome sleeper buffet-lounge-observation *Silver Sky*; diner *Silver Banquet*; *Silver Aspen*, a 48-seat flat-top coach, rebuilt in the 1960s from a 16-section sleeper; Vista-Dome coaches *Silver Pony*, *Silver Bronco*, and *Silver Mustang*; *Silver Shop*, a Vista-Dome dormitory buffet-lounge; *Silver Pine*, another flat-top coach; and *Silver Colt*, another Vista-Dome coach. These cars were all that remained of the Rio Grande's CZ fleet, as the railroad had sold its six sleepers to the National Railways of Mexico and its sole baggage car to the Algoma Central.

The first car in our consist was combine No. 1230, one of two built in 1950 as baggage-dormitory-chair cars for D&RGW's overnight Denver-Salt Lake City *Prospector* and the only *Prospector* cars the railroad retained after that train's discontinuance in 1967. Pullman-Standard cars in an otherwise all-

Budd *RGZ* consist, they had fluted stainless-steel sheathing below the window line. As with all *Prospector* cars, their upper panels were painted in the railroad's distinctive Aspen gold. Early in the *Rio Grande Zephyr* era, these had been repainted silver to better blend with the Budd cars, but that color apparently didn't adhere well, and when we rode the gold was back. Although the dormitory wasn't required for the *RGZ's* daylight run, the combine did serve three purposes: baggage, conductor's office, and overflow passenger space. Power for our train was a black freight Geep and the road's two remaining F9B units in their traditional gold and silver. Missing was F9A No. 5771, the point locomotive of choice.

Why the plethora of cars (including six domes, one more than the CZ carried in its glory days)? Actually, the abundance was the result of the previous day's westbound passenger count of 300-plus, swollen by two large tours. Although such groups were a critical piece of the *RGZ's* business, they did have a downside: operators often booked only the eastern Denver-Grand Junction portion of the run, where the most famous scenery lay. (In fact, the D&RGW would try, unsuccessfully, to discontinue the train west of Grand Junction.) And, in truth, the 14-hour Denver-Salt Lake run without any privacy into which to retreat could be a bit much for travelers taking the train ride as an excursion as much as for transportation.

Well, *almost* no privacy. The railroad did sell the three double bedrooms and the drawing room in *Silver Sky* as day space, and—mindful of how tiring the trip could be for our two- and three-

year-old daughters—I'd grabbed the drawing room. This proved a good acquisition, though I at least would spend the lion's share of time in *Silver Sky's* dome. But when No. 18 (the *RGZ* kept the CZ's old numbers, 17 and 18) slipped away from the Salt Lake station at 7 a.m., we were comfortably settled in our spacious digs.

Not for long, though, since breakfast in *Silver Banquet* called. My notes, sadly sketchy, tell me only this: "Diner—food exceptional, service excellent, fast and friendly." Naturally, I'd been hoping to find sweet remnants of the *California Zephyr* (which I'd last ridden in July 1969) aboard the *RGZ*, and by and large I wasn't disappointed. Of course, it wasn't the same train. CALIFORNIA ZEPHYR had been removed from the letterboards (but car names and line numbers survived in the Art Deco font carried by all of Burlington's *Zephyrs*). No Zephyrettes making en route announcements and calling dinner reservations. No "Vista-Dome Views" route-guide pamphlet. No neon tailsign aglow with the Golden Gate Bridge (no tailsign at all, in fact). *Silver Shop*, the buffet-lounge that on the *RGZ* generally served as back-up car for the diner and dome-obs, had lost its Cable Car Room motif—appropriately, since the train had nothing more to do with San Francisco, and the same thing could have been said about the tailsign. The Russell Patterson mural in the under-dome cocktail lounge of *Silver Sky* was gone, but Mary Lawser's fine bulkhead murals aboard the Vista-Dome coaches survived. CZ headrests remained in the coaches as did CZ linen in the diner, plus some silver, pencils, and order pads.





Two photos, Karl Zimmermann

The *Crescent* would change power at Peachtree Station, Atlanta, resulting in a smoky show as its four elegant E8's notched out after hours of idling. Here's No. 1 departing in late 1977 with fresh engines and the Atlanta-New Orleans dome car on the rear.

and Louisville & Nashville through Montgomery and Mobile. (Cars of both trains had been handled between Washington and New York by the Pennsylvania Railroad.)

The South is known for tradition and hospitality, and that surely was reinforced by my experiences on the *Southern Crescent*. Aboard the train in late December 1977 after its southbound departure from Washington, I slipped back once again into the streamliner world of the late 1940s. Porters wore white starched coats and traditional badged hats. Conductors dressed in vested dark-blue suits lifted tickets. The color palette in the sleepers still ran to pastels, in contrast to the jazzy purples and oranges that Amtrak had been applying to its décor.

In each room was a remarkably voluminous packet that included a letter from the president, a "welcome aboard" brochure, a timetable, a route guide, an excellent history of the train, a compen-

All in all, the diner was heartening, with menus little changed from the CZ days. *Silver Banquet* was fragrant with the good smells of breakfast when we entered. Our choices included all the old standbys, freshly cooked: eggs any style, griddle cakes, ham, bacon, sausage patties, even steak, with all the expected accompaniments. Dinner would feature "Boneless Rocky Mountain Trout, Saute, Lemon Butter," always the train's signature dish. There was also roast beef, chicken breast, and steak.

Silver Banquet was wonderful, but *Silver Sky* was even better, and we spent many hours in the dome watching the best of the American West scroll by. Or, for a change of venue and perspective, we camped in the two rearward-facing love seats in the observation lounge.

I'd revisit the *Rio Grande Zephyr* twice more, in 1978 and again in 1981. Two years later it was gone, the last of the Amtrak hold-outs, leaving nothing but fond memories—and, happily, a daily Amtrak train on its nonpareil route across Colorado and Utah. It outlived Rock Island's *Rockets* and the *Southern Crescent* by more than four years.

Hospitality on the Crescent

Since the *Southern Crescent* was more in my back yard than the *RGZ*, I was able to log eight trips aboard it between May 1, 1971, and February 1, 1979, when Southern Railway finally threw in its lot with Amtrak.

Car names are wonderful, and the *RGZ*'s "Silver" monikers in the Burling-

ton tradition were special, with the *Rio Grande*'s cars being intriguingly themed: *Silver Sky* offered vast vistas, *Silver Banquet* fine meals, *Silver Shop* a coffee-shop ambiance. Horse names were for Vista-Dome coaches; tree names flat-top coaches. All CZ cars had names, while the Southern followed the typical practice of naming only sleepers, and almost all of the ones I traveled aboard were in the most common of all configurations, 10-roomette/6-double-bedroom, and named in the "River" series. Either Southern had a knack for picking romantic, intriguing, euphonious names from among the waterways in its region or else I just got lucky, but in the course of the 1970s I tucked in between crisp sheets aboard *Seneca River*, *Yadkin River*, *Tombigbee River*, *Shenandoah River*, and *Rappahannock River*.

The *Southern Crescent*, the most famous but not the only train Southern Railway carried into the Amtrak era, dated from 1969, when the railroad merged two flagship trains running between New York and New Orleans (the "Crescent City"): the coaches-only *Southerner*, on the more direct, all-SR route through Birmingham, and the *Crescent Limited*, a luxury train of long standing, once all-Pullman and extra-fare, operated in conjunction with the Atlanta & West Point, Western Railway of Alabama,

Three menus, Karl Zimmermann collection





A *Crescent* porter stands by the steps of his sleeping car at Birmingham in February '74.



Two photos, Karl Zimmermann

Also dressed in traditional railroad garb, a conductor punches tickets aboard Salisbury-Asheville, N.C., train 3, the *Asheville Special* remnant that the Southern ran until July 1975.

dium of Southern's newspaper ads on the theme "Avoid the Strain—Ride the Train," a 30-page booklet of customer commendations (as well as a pencil and postage-paid form so we could add to them), a separate brochure of raves in the press, a statement of the company's corporate creed, and a decal.

Washington Union Station was where the *Southern Crescent* came together, when the through sleepers and coaches from New York were added to a consist that included a Budd-built 48-seat dining car and more coaches (also Budds) and sleepers, all Pullman-Standard. On that occasion in 1977 I'd booked a double bedroom from New York for my family, but in Washington we moved to what was then the premium sleeping-car space in America: the master room aboard 2-drawing room/1-master-room/buffet-lounge *Crescent Moon*, one of four such cars built for the *Crescent* in a 1949 re-equipping. Most of the cars that ran on the *Southern Crescent* in the 1970s were of this vintage.

There was one important exception, and we'd encountered it on a 1976 trip to Atlanta when our double bedroom had been in *Pacific Garden*. This Amtrak car, a Budd 10&6 of UP heritage, was serving as the New York-Los Angeles though sleeper, billed as the "Trans-continental Rail Cruise." It began operating in 1970 in a trade-off with the Interstate Commerce Commission, a quid pro quo for permission for Southern Pacific to reduce to tri-weekly its Los Angeles-New Orleans *Sunset Limited*

and Southern its New Orleans-Birmingham segment of the *Southern Crescent*.

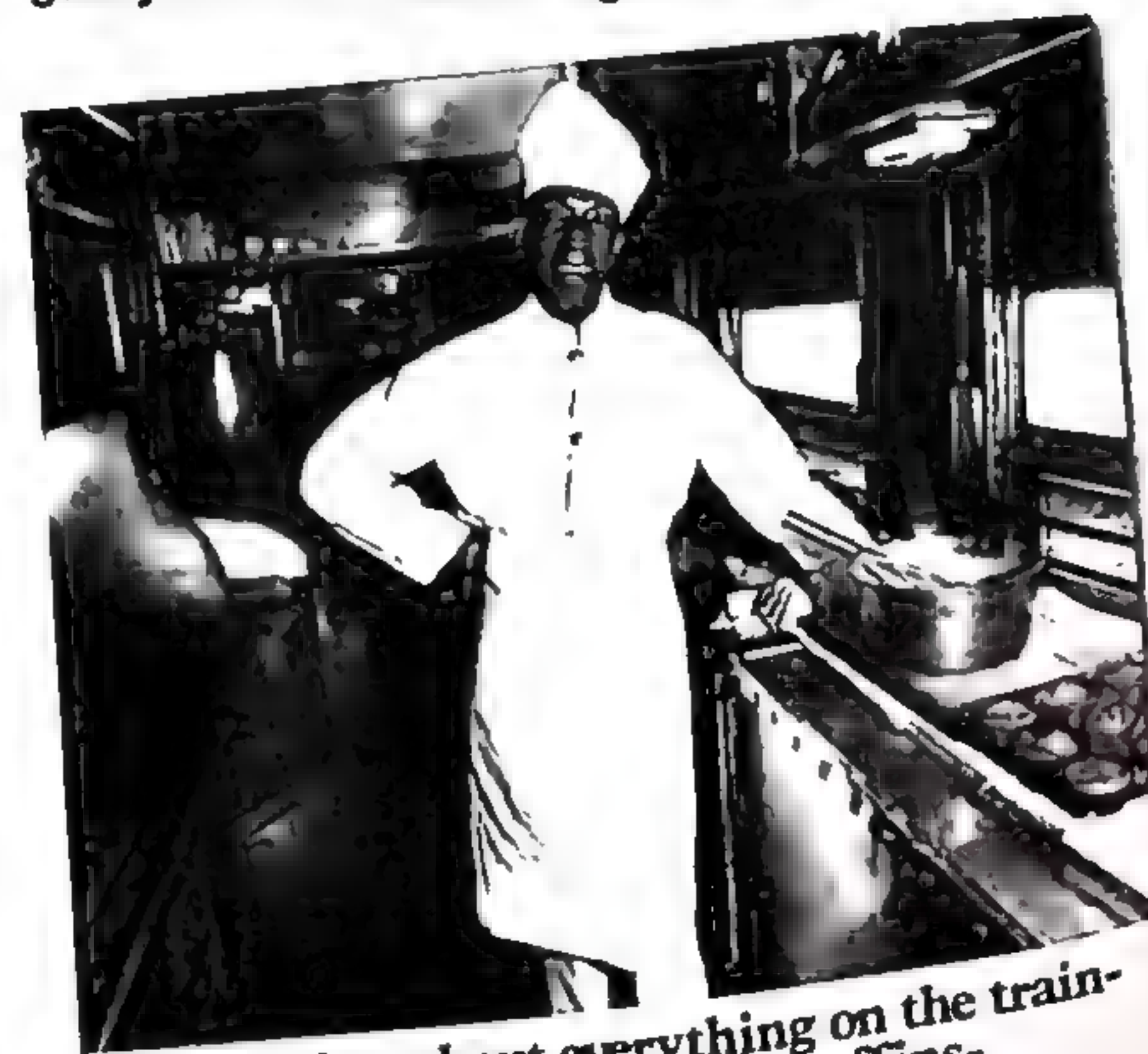
The master room really was a special space, and by 1977 Southern was touting it as such: "One of a kind! Luxury for two! Comfort for three!" A sofa and two chairs made down into an upper and two lower berths. The large toilet annex included a shower. "The only premium accommodation of this type in America—IN THE WORLD!"

The only bad thing was that the car operated only Washington-Atlanta, and with No. 1's 7:20 p.m. Washington departure and 8:40 a.m. Atlanta arrival, and No. 2's similar schedule northbound, there was little time to enjoy the room's daytime configuration. Though at its longest the *Southern Crescent* connected New York to New Orleans, significant shuffling of cars at Washington and Birmingham (later, Atlanta) was the norm. In 1977 coaches operated New York-Atlanta and Washington-Atlanta and, tri-weekly, New York and Washington to New Orleans. Ditto sleepers, except that the tri-weekly New York-New Orleans sleeper ran on to Los Angeles. This was a lot of switching for a flagship train with just one set of endpoints and was certain testimony that the Southern was not eager to run up car-miles unnecessarily.

The last piece of this mix-and-match was the dome car added between Atlanta and New Orleans on the days the train ran the full route. The first dome came into the Southern fold when subsidiary Central of Georgia in 1968 ac-

quired from Norfolk & Western a dome-parlor built by Pullman-Standard for Wabash's *Blue Bird*. CofG used the car on the Atlanta-Savannah *Nancy Hanks II* until October 1970. Southern then transferred it to the *Southern Crescent* and replaced it on the *Nancy* with another ex-Wabash dome, a coach built by P-S to an ACF design in 1958 for the City of St. Louis pool. Upon the *Nancy's* demise at the start of Amtrak, Southern moved the now-surplus dome to its Nos. 3 and 4, the Asheville-Salisbury, N.C., remnant of the *Asheville Special*, which once carried Pullmans for Washington and New York. Nos. 3 and 4 connected at Salisbury with the Washington-Charlotte *Piedmont*, another responsi-

Crescent chef Louis Price smiles from his galley in a 1976 *TRAINS* magazine ad.



"I cook just about everything on the train—even your breakfast muffins—just as I did when I started in 1941!"
Southern Crescent Chef Louis Price

bility that SR had continued to shoulder by not joining Amtrak. The *Piedmont* came off in November 1976.

In July 1975 the North Carolina Utilities Commission allowed Southern to drop 3 and 4, on the condition that the road operate summer and fall-color weekend excursions, called the *Skyland Special*, from Asheville to Old Fort, a three-and-half hour round trip that covered the most scenic part of the line. This service diminished in frequency and ended entirely after the Southern joined Amtrak, on February 1, 1979.

Names behind the trains

Some names linger as central to the legacies of these maverick trains, these late-joiners of Amtrak. For the *Rio Grande Zephyr*, it's Leonard Bernstein, the CZ dining-car steward who became the director of passenger and dining-car services in the RGZ era. For Southern's trains it of course is W. Graham Claytor Jr., the railroad's president from 1967 until 1977, when he left to become Secretary of the Navy. During 1982-93 he would serve as Amtrak's president, arguably its best ever. Claytor was a hands-on leader, both of Southern and Amtrak, and a frequent presence on the trains. After ruthlessly cutting SR passenger trains in the 1960s, he championed the *Southern Crescent*, decreeing in 1972, for instance, that the E8's that powered it would be repainted in the Sylvan green made famous by the railroad's Ps-4 Pacifics. Both locomotives were featured on the train's stylish dinner menus. Claytor's successor at Southern, L. Stanley Crane, was at the helm when the road joined Amtrak.

One other name haunts my memories of the *Southern Crescent*: Louis Price, the elegantly dignified chef that the railroad featured in a magazine ad, posing in his galley. The headline was a quote from Price: "I cook just about everything on the train—even your breakfast muffins—just as I did when I started in 1941." The text continued in his voice: "Folks are always saying how things are changing these days. Nothing's like it use to be." Price said that if the *Southern Crescent* had changed, it was for the better. "I'm one of the chefs on that train," the ad continued, "and I can tell you that the dining car still has tablecloths, silverware, flowers and those heavy plates."

On December 2, 1978, Price was up early preparing his bran muffins on No. 2 when, at 5:30 a.m., near Shipman, Va., seven cars, including the diner, derailed. Price was among the six fatalities.

Less than two months later, the *Crescent* became an Amtrak train. ■

Four others who stayed out



Art Peterson/Krambles-Peterson Archive

ROCK ISLAND was the other big railroad that, like Southern and Rio Grande, elected not to join Amtrak. For the destitute RI, however, it wasn't really a matter of choice. Although its two daily intercity train pairs (Chicago-Peoria and Chicago-Rock Island) took a little out of the bottom line each day, the road could not afford the up-front Amtrak entry fee. So, the *Peoria Rocket* and *Quad City Rocket* bumped along, sometimes carrying dome and observation cars for Butterworth Tours, but more often looking like the *Peoria Rocket* departing Chicago on September 13, 1975 (above). The *Rockets* hung on until January 1, 1979, when a state subsidy ended; the Rock itself quit the following year.



Art Peterson/Krambles-Peterson Archive

SOUTH SHORE LINE service was (and is) mostly commuter in nature, but its 88-mile Chicago-South Bend, Ind., runs made the road, known as "the last interurban," eligible for Amtrak. (Though the Amtrak law excluded commuter-type services, the ICC's 75-mile definition of "intercity" trains was generally followed.) When South Shore applied to end all service in 1976, Indiana formed a commuter agency to keep the M.U.'s rolling, as seen here at Fisher, Ind., in January 1981.

READING COMPANY ran publicly supported electric and diesel commuter trains on six lines out of Philadelphia. It also fielded the weekday Philly-Newark, N.J., remnants of the *Crusader* and *Wall Street*, which were considered intercity. The Newark trains quit on July 31, 1981, replaced by a short-lived connecting service at West Trenton. In May 1973, the RDC's for train 5619 pull into PC's Newark station, which the trains used after 1967.



Larry Eastwood

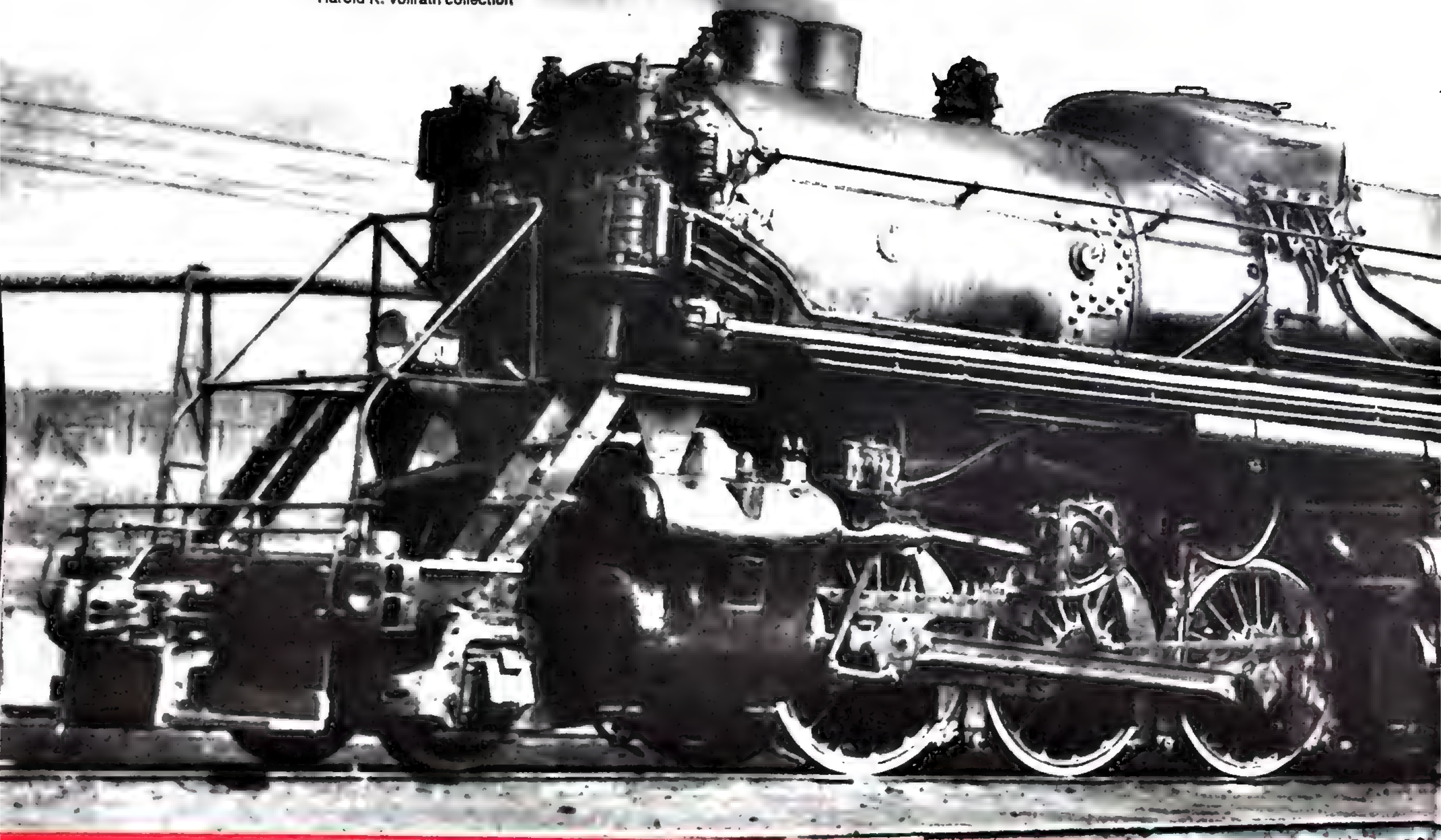


J. David Inales

GEORGIA RAILROAD ran daily-except-Sunday mixeds on its 171-mile Augusta-Atlanta main line and on three branches totaling 135 miles. A coach was provided on the main (left, in 1975), caboose seats on the branches. Hardly anyone rode, but the company feared losing its state tax exemption if the lines went freight-only, which they would have under Amtrak. So, Georgia stayed out. Successor Seaboard System got permission to end the mixeds in April 1983.

P&WV 1102, from the first group of 2-6-6-4's, is in as-built condition at Rook, Pa., in May 1940, with footboards and tender booster.

Harold K. Vollrath collection



Curves+hills+bridge

Seven big articulateds, the first of their type, put little Pittsburgh & West Virginia on the locomotive map

By Bert Pennypacker

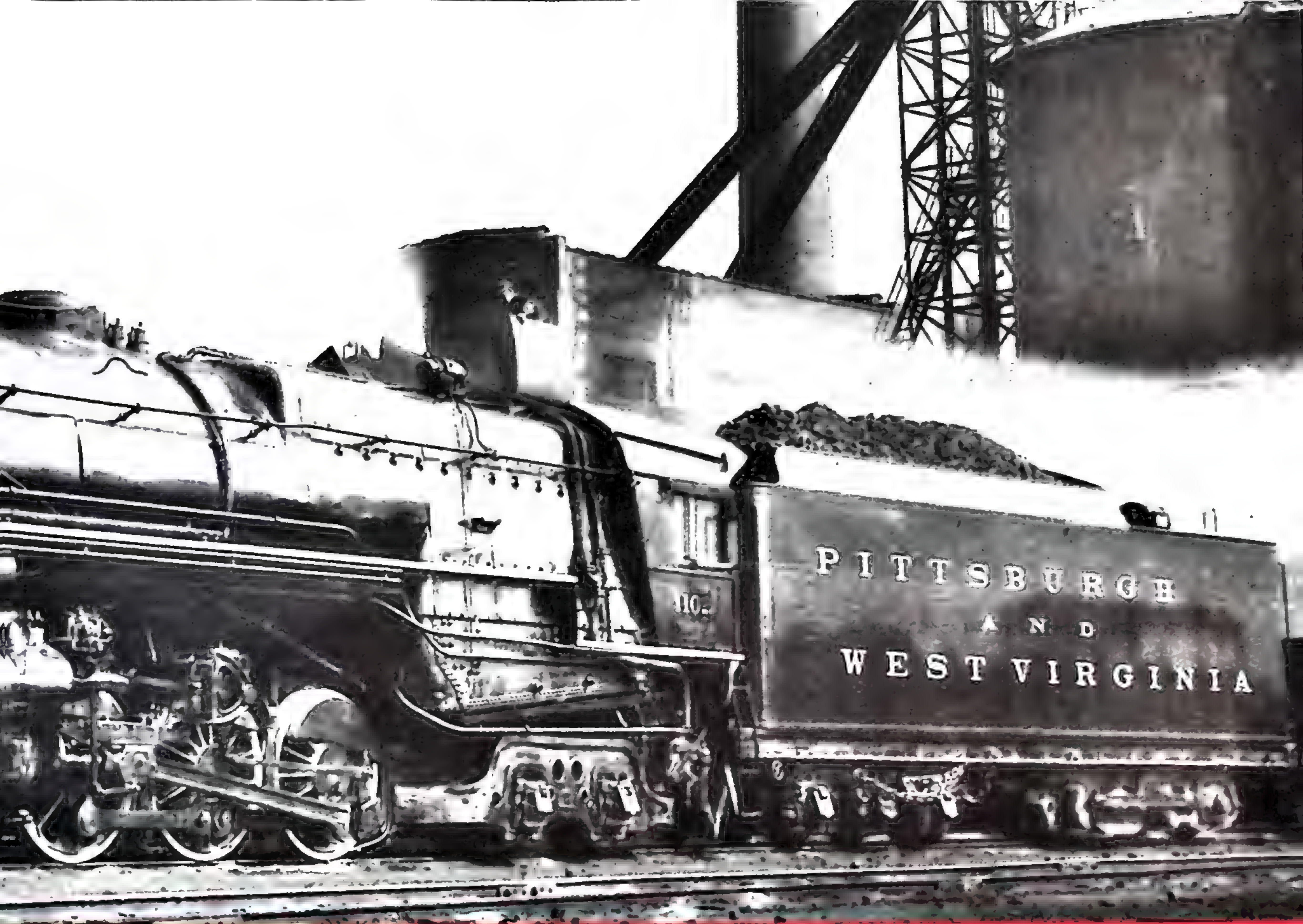
Back in 1948, while aboard a trolley car in Connellsville, Pa., on the old West Penn electric interurban system, something caught my eye. Just ahead, high on a steel viaduct, was a giant 2-6-6-4 locomotive of the Pittsburgh & West Virginia Railway. She made an impressive sight with her massive boiler and tender etched against the blue sky of a July afternoon. I got off

the trolley at the next stop, where a trim passenger station stood at ground level.

The building had not seen passenger trains for 15 years and was occupied by a real estate office. A stairway led up to track level, but was barricaded and posted with a NO TRESPASSING sign. Paying no heed, I climbed over the barricade and bounded up the stairway. Up above, I found two platforms flanking double tracks that merged into single

iron at the north (timetable west) end. Here was Connellsville interlocking, or "CV," the end of the Western Maryland Railway's main line from Baltimore and the point where WM connected with the Pittsburgh & Lake Erie. A quarter of a mile beyond, the P&WV main line diverged from the P&LE.

The machine I'd climbed the stairs to see was one of seven P&WV class J locomotives, the biggest power by far on the 132-mile road. The 2-6-6-4 was hauling manifest train 99, a through connection from the WM that the P&WV crew had picked up at WM's Bowest Yard, 1.7 miles to the east. The articulated would take the train to P&WV's Rook Yard in southwest suburban Pittsburgh, a run of only 56.4 miles but over rough terrain. At Rook, a 2-8-2



traffic=2-6-6-4

Mikado would take over for the 55-mile trip west to Pittsburgh Junction, Ohio, where it would enter Wheeling & Lake Erie rails. (Customarily, P&WV engines and crews continued to W&LE's hub of Brewster, Ohio; likewise, Wheeling engines and crews ran Brewster-Rook.)

These fast through connections were part of the "Alphabet Route," a marketed combination of eight relatively small railroads that could move freight between the East Coast and Chicago in as little as 30 hours. (Westward, the Alphabet partners were the New Haven, Lehigh & Hudson River, Jersey Central, Reading, WM, P&WV, W&LE, and Nickel Plate Road.)

The 2-6-6-4's crew said they were being held for a meet with eastbound freight 92, which soon arrived. Howev-

er, instead of another class J as I'd expected, 92 was hauled by P&WV's first road diesels: Fairbanks-Morse H20-44 2,000 h.p. end-cab road-switchers 50 and 51, received by P&WV in late 1947.

Once 92 cleared, 99 departed Connellsville, its 2-6-6-4 traversing P&LE track for a few hundred yards before entering home rails. This was the Connellsville Division of the P&WV, a line that struggled mightily to get where it was supposed to go and was the *raison d'être* for the class J's.

Before articulateds

The railroad that would become the Pittsburgh & West Virginia opened in 1904 as the 60-mile Wabash Pittsburgh Terminal Railway (the "h" was omitted from the Steel City's name between

1890 and 1911). It began at the W&LE connection at Pittsburg Junction and from there went eastward across the Ohio River at Mingo (south of Steubenville) and through West Virginia's northern Panhandle into Pennsylvania, where it built a grand passenger terminal in downtown Pittsburgh. This ambitious project was the brainchild of George J. Gould, who controlled both the Wabash and W&LE and wanted his rails to reach the Steel City as part of his plan to create a coast-to-coast rail system under his management.

Gould's great expectations of booming traffic failed to materialize, and by 1908, his WPT was in receivership, eking out a meager existence hauling coal from on-line mines. In 1917, the property was reorganized as the Pitts-



Ralph E. Hallock

J-1 No. 1102 rolls hopper cars eastward between Monessen and Connellsville in 1950. P&WV applied V-shaped pilots to its steam and diesel power to fend off rocks in its numerous cuts.

burgh & West Virginia Railway. The P&WV's salvation lay in its 1920 control of the West Side Belt Railroad, a 22-mile switching line that served steel mills and other firms in Pittsburgh and the Monongahela River ("Mon") valley.

Control of the West Side Belt afforded P&WV a much improved tonnage base, particularly in coal, iron ore, coke, limestone, and finished steel products. This traffic had a decided effect upon P&WV's modest fleet of freight cars, the principal components of which were 1,800 hoppers and 1,200 gondolas (the road owned no boxcars until the late 1940s). While the small road had excellent connections around Pittsburgh, it still struggled because the majority of its business was short-haul and switching. Passenger service was limited to two daily round trips west from Pittsburgh, which quit in 1931.

What P&WV needed was an easterly line-haul connection that also would set up a through route for bridge traffic. So in 1927 it took a bold step to build a new line southeast through extremely rough terrain to a connection with the Western Maryland at Connellsville. Construction took four years, during which time two 1929 events solidified P&WV's economic position. First, the West Side Belt was merged into the parent system. Then Pennroad Corp., the Pennsylvania Railroad holding company, bought a controlling interest in P&WV.

Connellsville connection

Construction of the Connellsville Extension began at Pierce, Pa., on the former West Side Belt. From Pierce to Connellsville, the 38 miles of new line had to conquer five separate summits with grades from 0.6 to 1 percent. The

line was single track, with several passing sidings. Except for 6 major bridges (of a total of 34), which ranged in length from 1,250 to 2,600 feet, level and tangent track was practically nonexistent. Curves of 6 degrees were common. There were two tunnels, one having a curve within, and cuts ranged up to 70 feet in depth. Indicative of the bridge-route mission of the line, there were only two stations—Sudan and Monessen—between Pierce and Connellsville, and no passenger service. A ceremony at Connellsville on February 10, 1931, marked completion of the project.

As things turned out, the Extension opened at a most inopportune time. The Great Depression was in full swing, with mines and mills shutting down or drastically cutting back production. P&WV had a fine new link in an East-to-Midwest bridge route, but precious little traffic to run over it.

Such traffic, if and when available, was expected to move from and to the WM at Connellsville. But look again, for WM already had a long-standing through-route arrangement with the P&LE. Upon reaching Connellsville, WM trains simply proceeded onto P&LE rails for 5.5 miles to arrive at the "Little Giant's" Dickerson Run yard. P&WV opened traffic agency offices in several key cities to beat the bushes and convince shippers to route their cars via P&WV. This resulted in a slow but steady increase in tonnage volume, thereby causing another problem. The biggest members of P&WV's 30-engine roster were 23 Consolidations and 4 Mikados. All dated from World War I or earlier, and none possessed the capacity to haul heavy tonnage over the Extension's severe terrain. The only immediate solution was doubleheading, but this was costly, and in any case there weren't enough engines to go around.

Locomotive search

P&WV needed more, and bigger, engines—but what kind? The road leased two locomotives from neighboring roads for testing and evaluation in 1933: Pennsy N2sa No. 7930, a USRA heavy 2-10-2 built in 1919, and Bessemer & Lake Erie 2-10-4 No. 605, a 1930 Baldwin. Because of their long rigid wheelbases, neither of these ten-coupled engines did well in tracking ability, especially on the Connellsville Division. In fact, a few derailments occurred.

So it came down to an engine having a much shorter wheelbase, yet one packing tremendous power. This pointed the way toward an articulated of a completely new design. P&WV consulted Baldwin, which came up with the

first 2-6-6-4. But this development didn't come out of the blue—it descended from another design step of 1930.

Since their U.S. debut in 1904, four-cylinder articulateds had been primarily low-driven Mallets. They were capable of moving immense trains, albeit slowly. Simple articulateds began appearing in the mid-1920s, but they were still slow-speed machines. Finally in 1930, Baldwin, in collaboration with B&O, advanced the articulated design to a high-horsepower fast freighter with a 2-6-6-2 wheel arrangement. Baldwin determined that the technology of designing a fast, powerful articulated involved a weight distribution akin to that of a passenger engine, with smaller cylinders placed directly under the smokebox. High steam pressure and large drivers were then added to the formula.

Baldwin built two 2-6-6-2's for B&O. No. 7400, class KK1, had a water-tube boiler, while KK2 No. 7450 employed a standard radial-stay firebox. Otherwise, they were similar, with 250 PSI steam pressure, 23x30-inch cylinders, and 70-inch driving wheels. They were inspired by longtime B&O Motive Power Chief Col. George H. Emerson, a great innovator and designer of experimental locomotives. The KK's incorporated some Super-Power concepts, but most importantly they introduced high-speed articulateds to the railroad industry. Despite some stability problems, they did well, even hauling coal drags over the East End of the Cumberland Division. But like all of Emerson's experimentals, they were not duplicated.

Taking B&O 7450 as a starting point, Baldwin enlarged the boiler and firebox, resulting in the need for a four-wheel trailing truck. Unlike virtually all other Super-Power designs, as well as previous P&WV practice, the firebox was of the Belpaire type, perhaps a reflection of Pennsy influence on P&WV through Pennroad.

The cylinders of America's pioneer 2-6-6-4 nearly duplicated those of the earlier B&O articulateds. But in deference to the Connellsville Extension's curves, it was advisable to use smaller 63-inch driving wheels, thereby achieving a rigid wheelbase of just 11 feet for each set of six drivers. The lower drivers also yielded a hefty tractive force of 97,500 lbs., which was further augmented by a booster engine on the rear tender truck. The 12-wheel tenders were of the open-bottom type, with a capacity of 20 tons coal and 20,000 gallons water. The road used the expansive flanks of the tenders to boldly display its entire name; previously, the standard tender lettering had been just



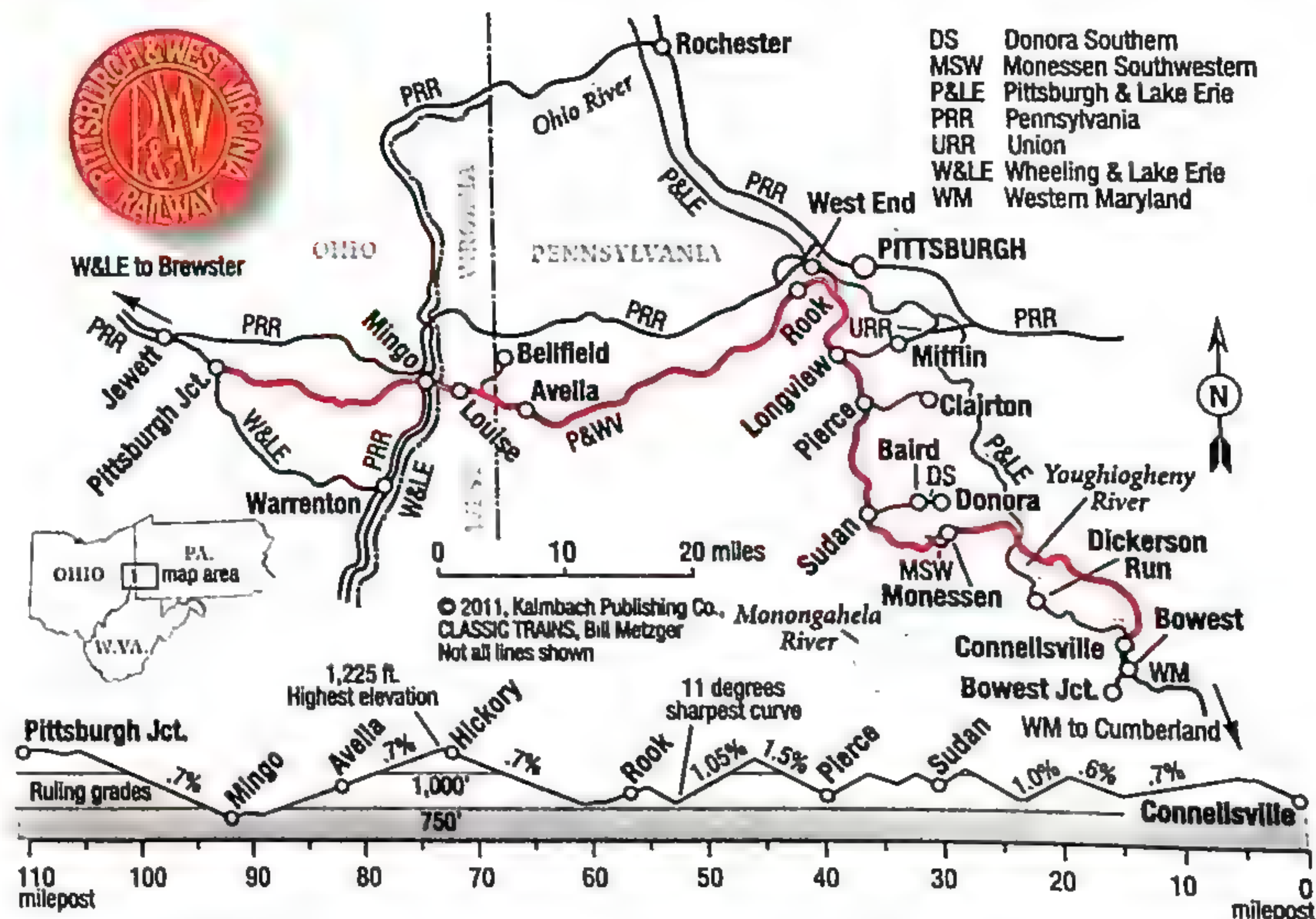
J. J. Young Jr.

P&WV and W&LE engines and crews ran through between Brewster, Ohio, and Rook, Pa. In September 1950 at Mingo on the P&WV, Wheeling 2-8-2 6008 heads onto the Ohio River bridge with the first section of train 92 as P&WV Mike 1010 waits with a westbound extra.



CLASSIC TRAINS collection

A pair of experimental B&O 2-6-6-2's were the partial inspiration for the P&WV 2-6-6-4's. B&O 7400 (above) sported a water-tube firebox, while sister 7450 had a conventional design.





Ralph E. Hallock

P&WV's Connellsville line was rife with major bridges. Biggest of all was this colossal crossing of the Monongahela River, seen in March 1950 supporting a 2-6-6-4 and freight 99. The three main spans had a lower level for the Monessen Southwestern, but it never used them.

"P&WV" initials. The full road name on the J's later gave way to a circular emblem and initials.

P&WV placed orders for three of the new 2-6-6-4's in March 1934 and put them in service as class J-1 Nos. 1100-1102 in November. The road returned to Baldwin in 1937 for four more, J-2's 1103-1106. The chief differences were in the tenders, which were cast-steel water-bottom types with 25 tons coal capacity. The new tenders also lacked boosters, and by 1944 P&WV had removed the boosters from its first three.

Other 2-6-6-4's

Even before Baldwin had completed the first P&WV trio, the builder in July 1934 took an order from Seaboard Air Line for five 2-6-6-4's. Delivered in March 1935, Nos. 2500-2504 were lighter and less powerful than the P&WV's. With 69-inch drivers, the SAL engines were true fast freight power, and Seaboard acquired five more from Baldwin in 1937. In an interesting twist, SAL in 1947 sold all 10 engines to the B&O, whose two experimental 2-6-6-2's had

inspired the 2-6-6-4 in the first place.

After the Seaboard, Norfolk & Western became interested in the 2-6-6-4. Its growing fleet of Y-series 2-8-8-2 Mallets was perfect for moving coal through the mountains, but the road needed an engine with power and speed. N&W engineers designed what would be the biggest, most powerful, and most numerous of all 2-6-6-4's, the class A. The road's Roanoke, Va., shops turned out the first one, No. 1200, in 1936; the fleet stood at 43 locomotives when production ended in 1950.

Around the time Baldwin was developing P&WV's 2-6-6-4's, Alco and Union Pacific began an effort to design a heavy fast freight locomotive. The result was the 4-6-6-4 Challenger type, 252 of which were built for eight railroads between 1936 and 1947, far outnumbering the 60 2-6-6-4's.

J's in action, then diesels

In the late 1940s, P&WV ran three scheduled manifest trains daily in each direction between Connellsville and Brewster, 161 miles. WM trains often

carried cars to hand off at Connellsville for both the P&WV and P&LE. Rook, P&WV's operations hub, boasted a roundhouse, locomotive and car shops, and an 800-car yard where through trains were switched and remade. The 2-6-6-4's ran principally between Connellsville and Rook, with 2-8-2's handling trains west of Rook.

In addition to coal for steel mills and other on-line plants, P&WV occasionally interchanged coal drags to the Western Maryland for movement to its Port Covington export terminal at Baltimore. During its early decades, as much as 61 percent of P&WV's traffic was coal, but control of the West Side Belt gave it a more diverse mix of manufacturing raw materials and finished goods, and by the 1930s, coal was down to 20 percent of P&WV's trade, with general freight, including bridge tonnage, up to 40 percent of its annual traffic of more than 8 million tons.

P&WV bought its first diesel, No. 30, a 1,000 h.p. Baldwin VO switcher for use at Rook, in 1943. This lone diesel, which averaged 22 hours of duty per

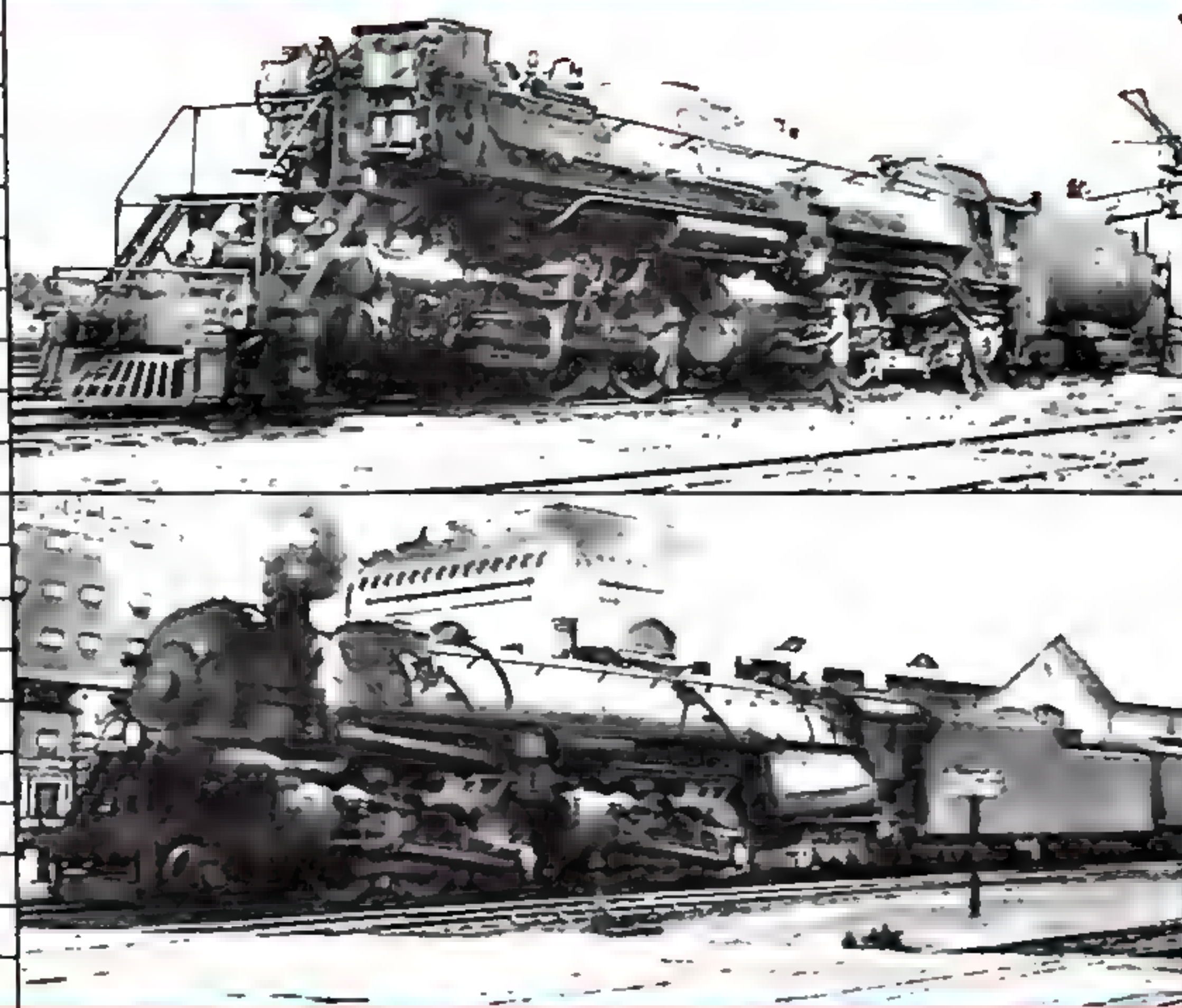
How the three 2-6-6-4 designs stacked up

	P&WV	SAL	N&W
Road numbers	1100-1106	2500-2509	1200-1242
Class	J-1 and J-2	R1 and R2	A
Number of engines	7	10	43
Builder	Baldwin	Baldwin	Roanoke
Years Built	1934, 1937	1935, 1937	1936-1950
Cylinders (inches)	(4) 23 x 32	(4) 22 x 30	(4) 24 x 30
Drivers (inches)	63	69	70
Rigid wheelbase	11 feet	12 feet	12 ft. 4 in.
Steam pressure	225	230	275
Firebox type	Belpaire	Radial stay	Radial stay
Grate area (sq. ft.)	102.3	96.3	122
Heating surface	5914	5429	6650
Superheater	1873	2397	2703
Weight on drivers	397,300	330,000	430,100
Total weight	528,040	480,000	570,000
Tractive force	97,500	82,300	104,500
Booster tractive force	16,000	None	None
Tender coal capacity	20 tons	24 tons	22 tons
Tender water capacity	20,000 gal.	16,000 gal.	22,000 gal.

P&WV notes: Nos. 1100-1102, built 1934, had boosters on rear tender truck; boosters removed 1941. 1103-1106, built 1937, had tenders with 25 tons coal capacity.

SAL notes: Nos. 2500-2504, built 1935, were class R1; 2505-2509, built 1937, were class R2. All sold to B&O in 1947 as B&O 7700-7709, classes KB1 and KB2.

N&W notes: Later A's had 300 PSI pressure, 432,450 lbs. weight on drivers, 573,000 lbs. total weight, 114,000 lbs. tractive force, and tenders with 40 tons capacity.



Two photos, Harold K. Vollrath collection

Besides P&WV, only Seaboard Air Line (top, No. 2501) and Norfolk & Western (above, No. 1200) ordered 2-6-6-4's; N&W had 43 of the 60 built.

day, had little to do with overall steam operations and in fact, P&WV's "newest" steam power came in 1945 when the road bought four USRA heavy Mikados from the Central of New Jersey for service between Rook and Brewster.

Then in October 1947, the first two 2,000 h.p. FM road-switchers arrived to handle the Alphabet Route freights all the way from Brewster to Connellsville. The diesels came slowly at first, though, partially because P&WV was not a rich railroad but also because the FM's had to prove their ability to handle heavy tonnage over the demanding Connellsville line. At that time, the mighty class J's were not considered to be easily replaceable machines.

In 1950, P&WV owned 23 steam locomotives (8 Consolidations, 8 Mikados, and the 7 articulateds) and 5 diesels (the Baldwin switcher and 4 FM H20-44's, Nos. 50-53). Baldwin demonstrator 1500 (its second with that road number), a model DRS-6-6-1500 six-motor road-switcher, tested on P&WV in August 1950, but P&WV didn't bite. The road, however, did go for a single unit of Baldwin's next version, designated AS616 and delivered as No. 40 in June 1951. Like No. 30, the big Baldwin was painted solid black, vs. the olive green with yellow stripe and red trim of the FM's. The AS616 would have a short P&WV career, however, being sold to the PRR (as No. 8114) in 1956.

By 1952, P&WV owned 30 locomotives: 12 steam and 18 diesel. The road

eventually acquired 22 H20-44's, taking six each in early 1951, May '52, and February '53, enabling the end of steam operations on March 1, 1953. (P&WV would buy four more FM's, 1,600 h.p. H16-44 road-switchers 90-93, at the end of 1956.) After dieselization, P&WV would toil on, mostly in obscurity, for another 11 years. By then, its FM's usually ran with more than two in a consist, and they worked in pools on Alphabet Route freights through Rook with sets of Western Maryland F7's and Nickel Plate EMD Geeps and Alco RS's.

Norfolk & Western leased P&WV in October 1964 as part of the Wabash-Nickel Plate merger (which also included the Akron, Canton & Youngstown, a

169-mile cross-Ohio pike). All 26 of P&WV's FM's carried over onto N&W's roster, keeping the same road numbers. The Nickel Plate had absorbed P&WV's western Alphabet Route connection W&LE in 1949, and in a final irony, when N&W spun off those lines, plus the former P&WV and AC&Y, in 1990, the new regional carrier chose the name Wheeling & Lake Erie.

All P&WV steam power was scrapped after the 1953 dieselization, and the carrier itself now has been history for almost 47 years, although its trackage is still active. Nevertheless, those seven pioneering 2-6-6-4's ensured a big place in locomotive history for the little Pittsburgh & West Virginia. ■



J. J. Young Jr.

Two H20-44's lead 81-car train 92 into Louise, W.Va., in March 1950. P&WV completely dieselized its road trains with the Fairbanks-Morse units, sending all seven 2-6-6-4's to scrap.



On Detroit's riverfront

This "bird" looks east on May 11, 1952, from the Ambassador Bridge, a 1929 highway link over the Detroit River south (!) to Windsor, Ontario, Canada. Chesapeake & Ohio No. 7, behind E7 105 (with the train name *Pere Marquette* on its flanks), has left Fort Street Union Depot ["Bumping Post," Winter 2004 CLASSIC TRAINS] at 5:10 p.m. and is passing FSUD's 21st Street roundhouse and C&O's Boat Yard. FSUD, which served C&O, Pennsylvania, and Wabash, was razed after Amtrak started. (C&O merged PM in 1947.) In 1952, all Wabash power and PRR freight and switch engines were serviced at Wabash's Delray roundhouse 4 miles west. C&O and Wabash moved servicing to Rougemere Yard, 5 miles west, and Oakwood Yard, 6 miles out, respectively, in 1954, and 21st Street roundhouse closed in 1959 when PRR dropped the *Red Arrow* to Detroit. C&O quit its river ferry operation for trackage rights through New York Central's tunnels in 1954. Wabash "boat job" transfers linked its Boat Yard with Oakwood from 1913 until 1994, when Norfolk Southern ended river ferry operations in favor of tunnel trackage rights. (CN/GTW did the same in 1975.) NS and CSX still carry on some transload and customer support operations on remaining Boat Yard tracks.—Jerry A. Pinkepank

- 1 C&O No. 7, the *Pere Marquette* for Grand Rapids
- 2 Coal dock for 21st St. roundhouse (out of photo to left), for all C&O engines and PRR passenger power
- 3 C&O E8's, alongside Jefferson St. leaving for FSUD for 5:50 p.m. departure of *George Washington*
- 4 21st St. coachyard, serving C&O, PRR, Wabash
- 5 Lead tracks for Wabash outbound freighthouse and 19th Street team tracks
- 6 Wabash inbound freighthouse and terminal offices
- 7 New York Central System freighthouse (C&O's and PRR's freighouses adjoined FSUD on Third Street)
- 8 C&O Boat Yard
- 9 Moored C&O ferry *Pere Marquette 14* (not at apron)
- 10 Wabash Boat Yard (ferry slips out of picture to right)
- 11 CN/Grand Trunk Western carferry slip adjoining GTW's Brush Street Station passenger terminal
- 12 NYC office building at Third Street (former Michigan Central station before river tunnels opened in 1910)
- 13 FSUD head building, at Fort and Third Streets
- 14 FSUD 2,513-foot-long double-track viaduct, at the beginning of an S-curve to left and into the depot
- 15 Penobscot Building, Detroit's tallest
- 16 Book Tower (left), and Guardian Building (right)

Photo, Elmer Treloar; research and text, Jerry A. Pinkepank

Photo Section





Big engine, big bridge: Southern Pacific cab-forward 4126, first of 25 AC-6 class 1930 Baldwin 4-8-8-2s, rolls a freight north (timetable eastward) across the mammoth Sacramento River bridge on the north side of Redding, Calif., in 1951. The 4,346-foot-long American Bridge Co. Warren deck truss structure was finished in 1940 as part of the Shasta Dam project completed in 1945. The project, which created Shasta Lake, entailed relocation of about 30 miles of SP mainline track.

James L. Martin

Photo Section





Above, Robert Milner; below left, Jim Thomas



"The Louie's" livery evolution: For a 1,400-mile pike, Minneapolis & St. Louis in the diesel era was more colorful than most, especially since it was absorbed by C&NW just nine years after dieselizing in 1951. Known more for its fleet of 35 Alco RS1's—largest in the land—delivered in *nine* color schemes, the Louie augmented the pioneering Alcos with EMD F and GP units. M&StL's six FT's came in green and yellow, while later F's reversed that, exemplified by F3 duo 348 (built in, yes, March 1948), rolling east (above) on Illinois Central in March 1955 at Waterloo, Iowa, with run-through train 94, interchanged at Glenville, Minn. The Louie's last livery was red-and-white, as on GP9M's 605 and 607 (on which FT's and F2's were traded in) and F7 410 and a sibling, crossing the Burlington main at Monmouth, Ill., in summer 1959.

Photo Section



I. W. King photo; Joel King collection

Virginian Railway, largely a coal-hauler, sought to increase capacity by electrifying 135 mainline miles between Mullens, W.Va., and Roanoke, Va., in 1922-25. First motive power was 36 Alco-Westinghouse 2,375 h.p. box-cabs, 30 of them three-unit sets. No. 110 leads a merchandise extra near Mullens in 1955, seven years before electric operation ceased.



Linn H. Westcott

Piedmont & Northern box-cab 5612 works at the rotary coal dumper at Duke Power's Marshall steam station at Terrell, N.C., near Mount Holly, toward the 1954 end of P&N's 1,500-volt electrification. P&N, a heavy freight hauler that dated from 1911, totaled 128 miles on two unconnected divisions. The 5612 was a 1949 rebuild from 1918 box-cab 5600.



Monty Powell

Milwaukee Road opened its Pacific Extension in 1909 and began 3,000-volt D.C. electrified service on the 439-mile leg between Harlowton, Mont., and Avery, Idaho, in 1915-16. Initial road freight power was 42 twin-unit GE box-cabs, two of which (units E36A-E37C-E37D-E36B) glide into Butte, Mont., on April 28, 1958. The juice was turned off here in 1974.

Photo Section



Barney L. Stone; Krambles-Peterson Archive

Pacific Great Eastern was four years away from reaching Prince George, B.C., on July 14, 1948, when 1945 CLC 2-8-2 No. 163 worked at Lillooet, 120 miles north of the Squamish dock.



Barney L. Stone; Krambles-Peterson Archive

Rio Grande Southern, the quaint and scenic but forever financially frail 172-mile 3-foot-gauge plke in southwestern Colorado, often depended on big connection Denver & Rio Grande Western for motive power, exemplified by "Mudhen" 2-8-2 No. 463 steaming through Dolores on September 14, 1949.



Barney L. Stone; Krambles-Peterson Archive

Rutland RS3's roll the World of Mirth Shows train through Shelburne, Vt., on September 5, 1954, Labor Day weekend Sunday, as the carnival heads for the Rutland Fair (later Vermont State Fair) after playing the Champlain Valley Fair at Essex Junction. About a dozen U.S. carnivals moved by rail in this era.



Bob Krone

Chesapeake Western, a 54-mile T-shaped west central Virginia road, employed three 1946 Baldwin DS-4-4-660's, two of which drill cars at Harrisonburg, site of the Southern Railway interchange, on November 5, 1958. CW, under Norfolk & Western control after 1954, also reached C&O at Staunton.

The Swamp Rats

In 1956, Argent Lumber provided a last look back at 19th century railroading

By Jim Shaughnessy • Photos by the author



Most every archaeologist, historian, and student of railroading wishes he or she had a "time machine" to transport them back to some era they missed, or perhaps are studying. The railroad historian might set the dial for a year late in the 19th century—1880 would work. This was before the adoption of the Janney automatic coupler and George Westinghouse's air brake. Without looking hard, a visitor to 1880 could find wood-burning steam locomotives equipped with link-and-pin couplers, sporting balloon smokestacks, lacking automatic train brakes, running on narrow-gauge iron rails, and taking a seemingly casual approach to operations.

Three-quarters of a century later, in early 1956 in rural South Carolina, I was in effect granted that wish when I visited the operations of Argent Lumber Co., in Hardeeville,

for Argent's railroad still operated under those exact circumstances! Over the years throughout the South, many swamp-area rail lumbering operations had done the same, but modern equipment, competition, and/or depleted timber resources had relegated most of them to the memory albums.

Not so at Hardeeville, just inside the Palmetto State some 25 miles north of Savannah, Ga. Tiny Hardeeville (1950 population 546) had been home to this fascinating railroad logging operation since 1916, when Argent was formed to log an 8,000-acre tract of original-growth short-leaf pine.

As Argent's cutting operations progressed, they expanded onto several adjacent tracts, the last of which was in a swamp just across the Savannah River in Georgia. Logging there began in 1951, and Argent's rails accessed it via a secondhand 200-foot-long highway swing bridge [page 88],

Argent Lumber 2-6-2 No. 5, a 1910 Lima (left in large photo) brings logs to the Bear Creek transfer point as 2-6-0 No. 2, a 1906 Baldwin (right) waits for the exchange. On another day (small photo), No. 5 greets 16-ton 1911 Porter 2-8-0 No. 7, Argent's "road engine."



which it acquired and moved from near Brunswick, Ga.

Argent's 3-foot-gauge "network" consisted of about 13 miles of "main line" from the Hardeeville mill into Georgia, plus 12 to 15 miles of spur tracks. Light rails of just 30 or 40 lbs. per yard were laid on untreated ties cut at the mill from logs considered not marketable. The tracks in the swamps were built on a wood support system, resting on piles pounded into the water-soaked ground by steam-powered pile drivers. Any derailment would cause a headache, so great care was taken in construction and operations. The mill, just north of Hardeeville, was served by both the Atlantic Coast Line and the Southern Railway, so the complex sported stretches of dual-gauge track.

Toward the end of January 1956, I was en route to Florida with a non-railfan friend, but I'd heard about Argent. Driving into the mill yard, we found a beehive of what appeared to be semi-organized chaos, set in a facility in a generally rundown condition. Tiny wood-burning steam locomotives shuffled cars around the yard, while in the background an irregularly shaped sawmill complex with seven tall stacks belching smoke crowned the busy scene.

A present-day OSHA or FRA inspector would suffer cardiac arrest with his first step onto the property. A look into a locomotive cab revealed only the most basic controls, probably demanding a talent that might well evade a hogger who grew up on power that met





A train approaches Argent Lumber's secondhand swing bridge over the Savannah River, 5 miles out of Hardeeville, S.C., with a morning's worth of cut timber. The former highway span was moved north from near Brunswick, Ga., after Argent opened the Georgia tract in 1951.

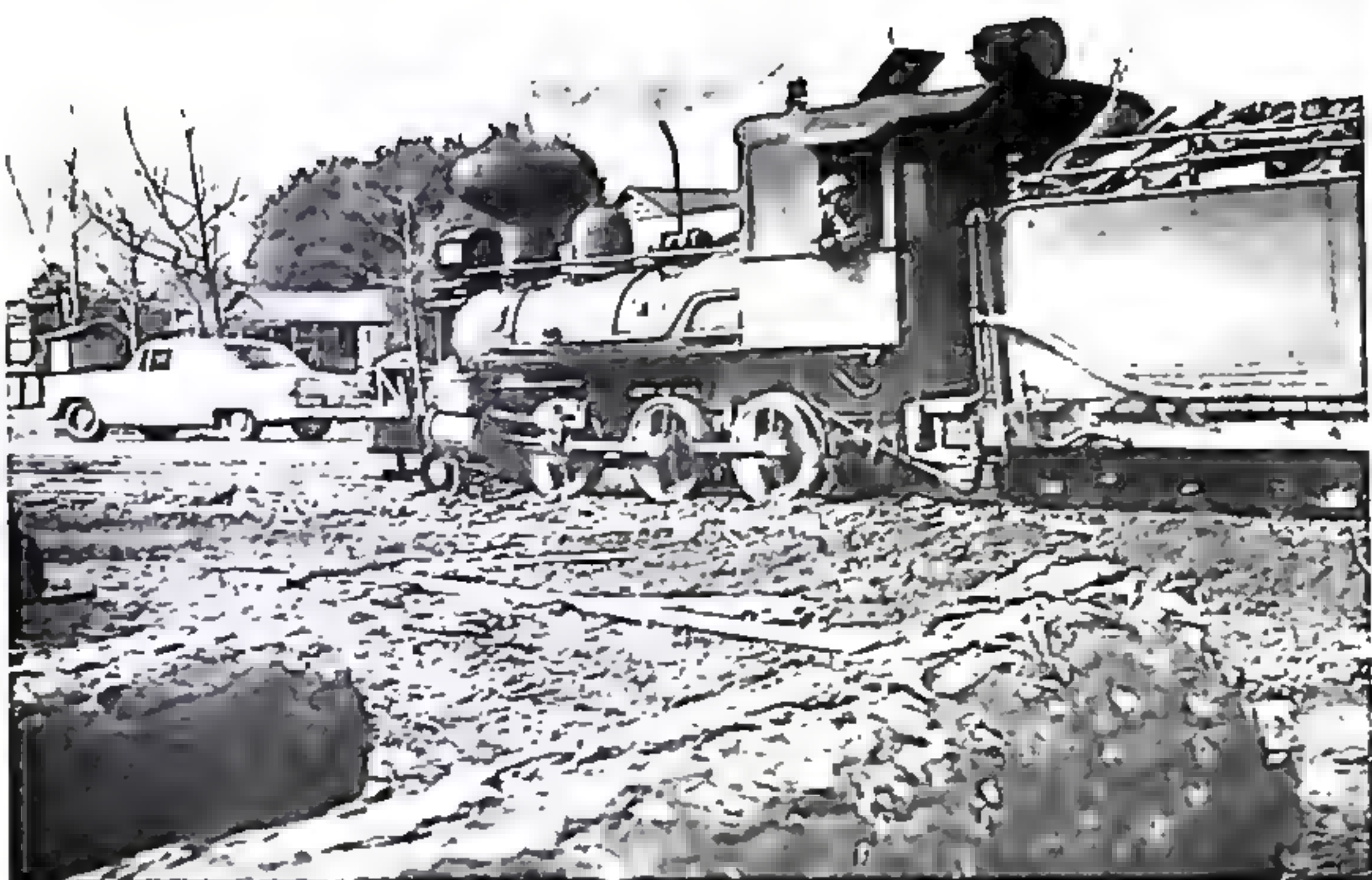
more modern safety regulations. Take 1906 Baldwin 2-6-0 No. 2, whose cab contained only a throttle, steam gauge, two injectors, a Johnson bar or manual reverse, a steam brake valve, a whistle cord, and three water cocks in lieu of a boiler water glass. Other amenities included seat boxes, an oil can, a water jug, and a metal rack over the firebox door on which to keep coffee jars warm. One man functioned as both fireman and engineer; on the "road train" into the woods, his helper would toss pine logs into the firebox.

Despite the rudimentary conditions, or perhaps even because of them, the Argent mill produced a flood of timber well into the 1950s.

Operations would get started early in the day, with two

trains departing the mill yard and heading out to the cutting areas in the swamps across the river. One train would bring enough empty log cars to load in the first half of the workday. The second train, with a more varied consist, would have more log cars but also some cars with built-up sides. These "supply cars" carried all sorts of tools, re-railing devices, chain saws, cables, and 55-gallon drums of lubrication oil. Also in the consist would be several "slab cars" carrying a supply of two-foot log trimmings from the mill to feed the boilers of the pile drivers, steam skidders, and locomotives while they worked in the cutting areas. Wood was Argent's universal fuel!

After crossing the Southern Railway diamond, protected



The fireman on No. 3, a 1905 Porter and smallest of Argent's seven engines, watches in the yard while logs from the stockpile are being loaded. The author's 1956 Ford parked 50 feet away offers a size comparison. At right, No. 3 works on the mill's dual-gauge track.

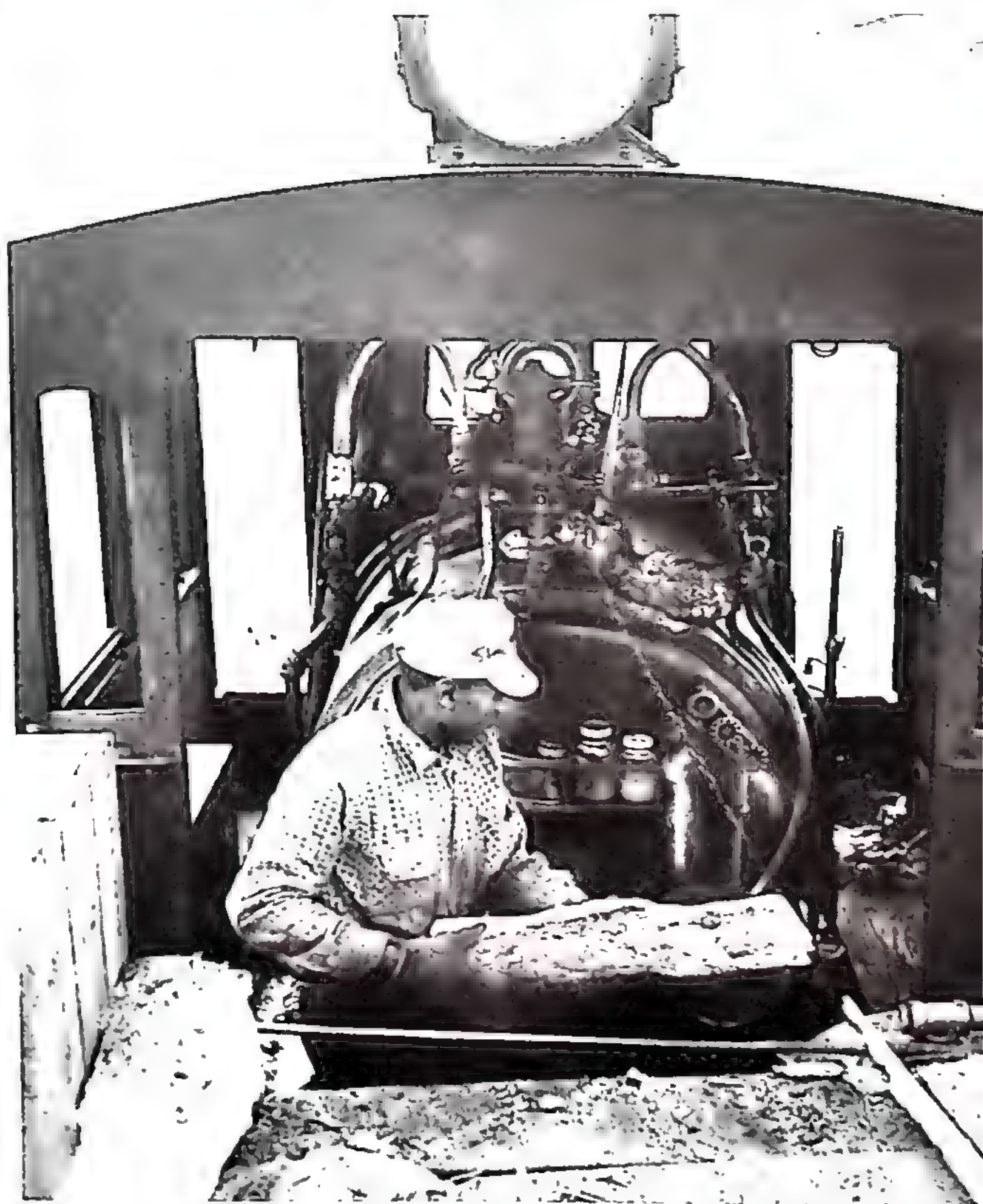


by hand-operated signals and derails, and nearby U.S. Highway 321, the second train would go another mile or more and, after crossing County Road 34, stop at a parking area just short of the Savannah River bridge. Some of the woodsmen who had autos would drive here to start their day. The workers rode in "crew cars," homemade rough pine mini-boxcars, built on skeleton log flats, with two windows on each side and a platform with steps at each end. In a way, they resembled transfer cabooses (with link-and-pin couplers, of course) and they gave the second consist a mixed-train look. Reflecting the times and the region, there were separate cars for white and black workers.

By noon, 20 to 25 log cars would be loaded in the cutting areas and brought by the two woods locomotives to a staging area called Bear Creek, adjacent to the river bridge. There they would be met by the road train, which had brought empty log cars, unloaded at the mill during the morning, to accommodate the afternoon harvest. Bear Creek was Argent's equivalent of UP's big North Platte or NYC's Selkirk classification yards, albeit at the opposite end of the scale.

This being noontime now, it was lunch hour and the crews would break out their tin lunch pails, exchange the gossip of the day and probably some hunting tales, and they'd even spend some time wiping down the locomotives' boiler jackets. After this brief respite for both men and machines, the road train, usually behind big No. 7, a 2-8-0, would set off back to the mill while the other two engines headed west for the cutting areas with empty log cars. When No. 7 stormed across a highway crossing belching pine-wood smoke with her whistle screaming, she had to apologize to no one—be they UP Big Boy or NYC Niagara—for her size, power, fuel, or station in life.

Back at the mill, the morning routine would be repeated, spotting log cars at the unloading ramp, shifting slab cars to be loaded for use the next day, assembling strings of empty log cars, and so forth. At least one other locomotive, sometimes two, was needed to make the moves necessary to avoid gridlock around the mill.



Argent engine cabs were rudimentary. The fireman on No. 7 throws a chunk of Georgia pine into the firebox to keep steam at the 150 PSI mark. Slab wood was burned both at the mill and in the locomotives.



A crewman protects the U.S. 321 highway crossing a mile from the mill as No. 7 storms across with logs. Seen in such action, the little 2-8-0 didn't have to apologize to anyone, or any locomotive, regardless of dimensions and duty, for her size, power, fuel, or station in life!

Although it had seven steam engines, Argent wasn't all-steam—a standard-gauge Plymouth Model AL “critter” was used to keep empty and loaded boxcars moving at the loading docks. During my two visits (we stopped at Argent a week later, on the way home from Florida), 2-6-0 No. 1 was stored as stand-by, while No. 4 was in the shop for repairs, leaving Nos. 2, 3, 5, 6, and 7 active. (No. 6 had just been returned to service, after dropping her crown sheet the year before in a tragedy that killed two workers.)

Out in the swamp, operations would wind down around 3 p.m., when the two locomotives there would gather for departure with the crew cars, empty slab cars, and log cars that had been loaded after lunch. This operation was timed

to get out before the mosquitoes took over for the evening. By 3:30 the two trains had crossed the river bridge and dropped off the highway commuters. They then headed back across County Road 34, Highway 321, and the Southern Railway diamond to the mill.

Thus were the operations of Argent Lumber Co. during its final years. Crews were cutting hardwoods such as cypress, oak, gum, and juniper, plus other softwoods like pine when they ran across them. The mill could process about 75,000 board-feet a day. By the time I visited, the firm's profit margin was shrinking but apparently sufficient to keep going. Many of the people in and around Hardee-



When the author visited, 1914 Porter 2-6-0 No. 1 (above) was kept serviceable at the mill as backup. At right, No. 7 has shoved loads up the dumping ramp; the cars ahead of her are "fuel cars." The hose was for taking water from the swamps. Argent used about 50 cars.



ville were employed either by the lumber company or by local businesses that benefited economically from Argent's presence.

Early in 1956, however, the federal government raised the minimum wage to \$1.00 per hour. This, it was promised, would be a benefit to all workers in the country . . . but not so for Argent employees, as it turned out. Management studied their finances and concluded that with the higher wage, they could no longer make ends meet cutting lumber. The wage law took effect March 1, 1956, and soon both the sawmill and logging operation were shut down, resulting in unemployment for 400 Argent workers. I had made it with only weeks to spare!

The planing mill operated until January 1957 to finish work on all the rough-cut lumber on hand, and in May, Argent's properties were sold to Union Bag-Camp Corp. According to Mallory Hope Ferrell's hardcover book on Argent (Pacific Fast Mail, 1995), before scrapping of the railroad and mill began, 2-6-0 No. 3 made a final run into the Georgia swamps on July 22, 1958, to bring out equipment, and during the dismantling of the railroad and mill, No. 3 was used on scrap trains into early 1959.

Almost four decades later, in April 1998, I returned to Hardeeville and found not a trace of the bustling sawmill or railroad, just a big clearing with tall weeds and grass. That "time machine" had been dialed back to "The Present." However, I was gratified to find 2-8-0 No. 7 on display under a protective roof next to the Hardeeville town hall, offering a bit of proof that once upon a time there really was a 3-foot-gauge steam railroad here. Moreover, as I would learn, all seven of Argent's little wood-burners were saved from the scrapper's torch and are on display or in operation at various locations around the country! For details, turn the page to "Classics Today." ■



A night hostler's helper loads coal into the tender of No. 5. Argent's engines burned a mixture of fuel, with the coal maintaining a base for the wood, yielding a better fire for making steam during hard pulls.

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See more of Jim Shaughnessy's Argent Lumber steam photos at www.ClassicTrainsMag.com



Jeff Terry

Ex-Argent 2-6-0 No. 6 hauls many thousands each Labor Day weekend at Mount Pleasant, Iowa.

ARGENT'S RAT PACK LIVES ON

All seven steam rodents found homes outside the swamp

By Jim Wrinn

Despite Argent Lumber Co.'s relatively early exit from the ranks of steam-powered industrial railroads, all seven of its "swamp rats" made it to land—and preservation. At least one steams regularly, and if your pockets are deep enough, you can even own another.

As Jim Shaughnessy reports on the previous pages, one swamp rat stayed home. Consolidation No. 7, the "big engine," remains in Hardeeville, S.C., displayed outdoors under a roof.

Argent No. 6, an 1891 Baldwin 2-6-0, runs every Labor Day weekend as one of the steam stars on the famous Midwest Central Railroad in Mount Pleasant, Iowa. The Mogul carries the name of her original owner, the Surry, Sussex & Southampton, a Virginia line. Also at Midwest Central, but inactive since

1987, is Mogul No. 2, built for Pennsylvania's New Berlin & Winfield.

Argent 2-6-2 No. 5 helped commemorate the long-lost Nevada County Narrow Gauge in California and now is for sale. The Prairie, along with a home-made tender and two open-air tourist cars, are listed with broker D. F. Barnhardt & Associates with an asking price of \$279,000. It last ran, on the grounds of the Northern Queen Inn at Nevada City, in 2001.

Argent 2-8-0 No. 4 (Porter, 1909) found its way to Massachusetts' 2-foot-gauge Edaville Railroad. Richard May later purchased it from Edaville for restoration, then sold it to the Connecticut Antique Machinery Association in the late 1990s. It's displayed at the group's museum in Kent, Conn.

The Southern Forest World Museum

at Waycross, Ga., is home to 2-6-0 No. 3, which is displayed under a roof.

The final Argent survivor, Mogul No. 1, holds a special connection for me, for she was the first steam locomotive I ever operated. We crossed paths in April 1979 at a location and in a manner totally out of character for one of Argent's unglamorous workhorses: an amusement park in Panama City, Fla.

No. 1 ran on the Petticoat Junction Railroad there, and I was an 18-year-old North Carolina high school student who'd been corresponding with the railroad's engineer, retired Louisiana highway patrol officer Wilbur T. Golson. We shared a love of steam trains, and Golson invited me and my parents to come down and spend a day with him on the tiny Mogul, which was then numbered 7, named *Lois*, and painted in a gaudy red, gold, and blue scheme and pulling makeshift coaches on a circle of track.

She had been set up for one-man operation and converted to burn oil, but retained her steam brakes and cabbage stack. After a bit, Golson let me take the controls. I missed stopping at the platform a time or two, and managed to bungle the steam pressure at first, but I never let the water get low in the glass (even then I knew that was a no-no).

By the end of the day, however, I had gotten pretty good at making the station stops, understood that the atomizer needed to be cranked up a minute or two before the run to maintain steam pressure, and as Golson advised, felt free at blowing the whistle. "You can't blow the whistle too much—it just brings in more people off the highway," he said. It was a tad embarrassing to be blowing when there was no crossing or other need for a warning, but the engineer said to do it, so, I did! It was the only time I ever saw Golson or Argent No. 1, but it was more reinforcement for me that steam locomotives were among the coolest things on the planet.

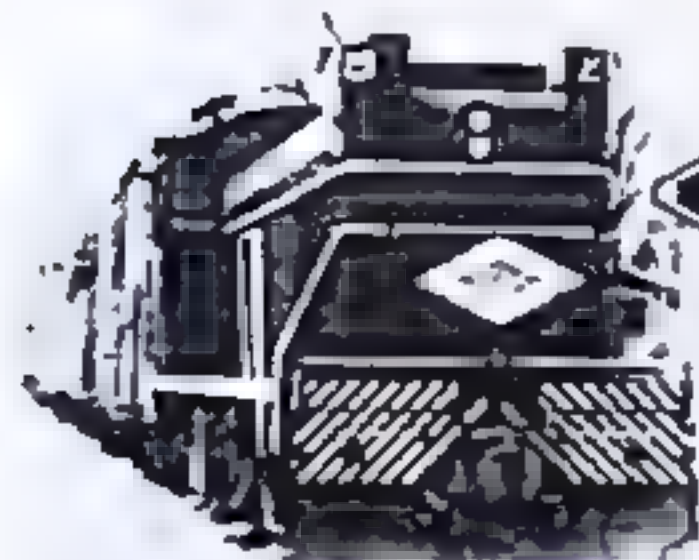
The Petticoat Junction operation ran from 1963 to 1984, and today No. 1 is privately owned in Warrior, Ala., and steams infrequently after a rebuild in the mid-2000s. My brief time with her was surely nothing like pulling logs in the swamps, but looking back on the experience 32 years later, it ranks as one of those special days when my inexperienced teenaged hands tugged on a throttle for the first time. It was a great thrill to touch one of the engines from a legendary operation—like twisting the tail of a live swamp rat. ■

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The Way It Was

Crisis at the coal chute!

A Canadian National fireman remembers two run-ins with refueling equipment



W. H. N. Rossiter

The engineer of Canadian National 2-8-2 3503 enjoys the breeze as he hurries a freight eastward at Lorne Park, Ont., in August 1955.

A steam locomotive fireman's duties go far beyond the actual firing of the locomotive. Besides "keeping her hot," with full steam pressure and lots of water in the boiler, he had to replenish the coal and water in the locomotive's tender. The latter were not always pleasant duties, but necessary if you wanted to keep that big steamer hustling over the road.

I learned about these tasks in my

early 20s, when I was a Canadian National Railways fireman with a starting date of October 8, 1950, and working in the wilds of northern Ontario. Filling the tender with water could be a relatively easy, even enjoyable chore on a mild day. But you had to be careful in the frigid cold weather during the winter, as overflowing water would freeze almost immediately as it hit the ground, making for very slippery, awk-

ward, and dangerous conditions. Taking on coal was another story. I was never too excited about stopping at a coal chute to refill the bunker with black diamonds.

Sometimes taking coal at a wayside coal chute would turn into a balancing act. Many CNR engines had coal bunkers that did not extend the full width of the tender. Standing on the narrow walkway alongside the bunker, you

held the chute in a downward position with one hand and pulled the chain that released the coal from the chute with the other. On tenders not equipped with side walkways, you had to stand on the edge of the coal pile, being careful not to slip into the big space in the tender that you were about to fill with tons of hard, dusty material. Lots of fun, especially at night or in inclement weather. Some coal stops were particularly memorable, and two stand out in my memory.

In this first instance, I was firing a 2-8-2 Mikado on a manifest freight train heading east on the transcontinental main line toward the terminal of Hornepayne, Ont., 39 miles west of CNR's crossing of the Algoma Central Railway at Oba. It was a blistering hot day in August 1954 with an exceptionally strong south wind. The small lumber town of Caramat, about 75 miles west of Hornepayne, would be a double stop for our train, as we would be taking both coal and water. As we got closer to the Caramat yard limits, the skies turned very dark, and lightning and thunder were making their presence known. But there was work to be done, and I was the one to do it.

While I was taking water at the huge tank, down came the rain in a torrential fashion, soaking me to the skin in a matter of minutes. That wasn't really so bad, considering the day's oppressive heat and the fact that I'd soon be back in our Mikado's vestibule cab, which was like an oven in the hot weather. I'd dry out quickly in there. When the tender had filled with water, I pushed the spout back into position and stayed on the tender deck as the engineer moved us up to the coal chute.

As luck would have it, the chute was full of dry, powdery coal. Black dust flew everywhere as the coal slid down the chute. The strong wind was blowing right into my face, and the coal dust stuck to the wet me like glue on paper.

When I got back into the cab, I was a sorry sight, covered in coal dust from head to toe. The engineer, head brakeman, and I all had a great laugh at my expense. However, thanks to that toasty cab, within 10 miles I was totally dry, and the coal dust came off with no problem. Thank goodness for the squirt

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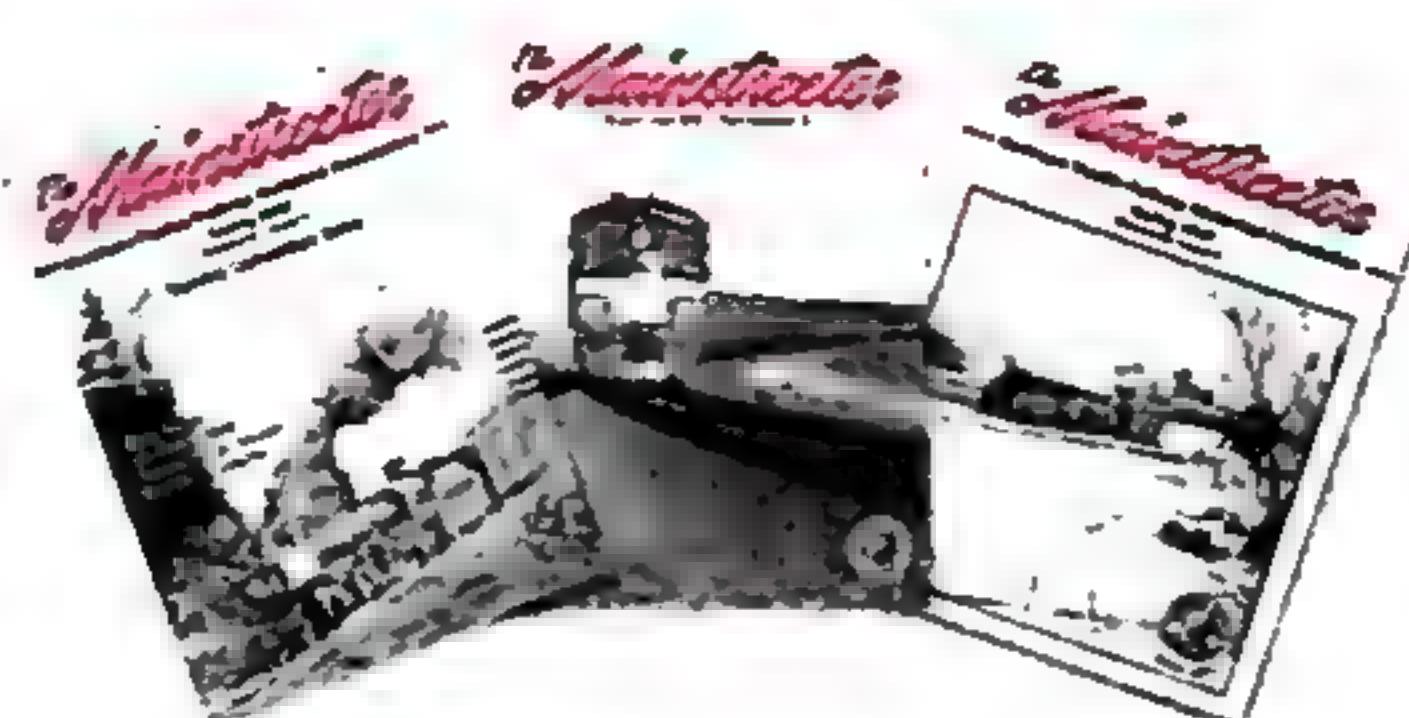
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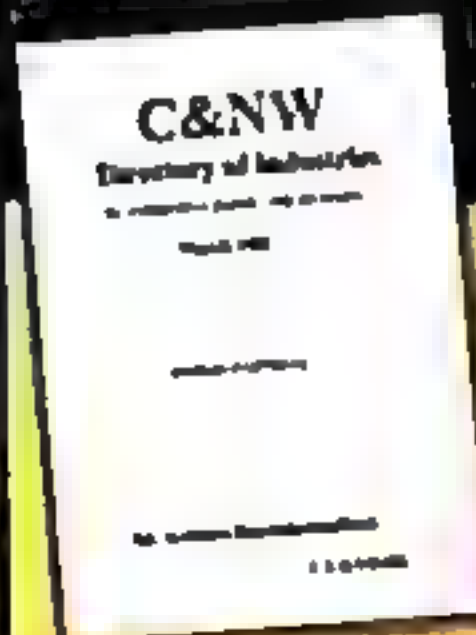
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The Way It Was

hose in the cab, which gave me enough warm water to clean off my somewhat dirty face. Needless to say, my overalls and other clothing made a quick trip to the washing machine upon arrival in Hornepayne.

My second memorable coal chute incident involves firing a passenger train in January 1955 west from Longlac, Ont., to Port Arthur (now known as Thunder Bay). It was a cold night—of course, what other kinds are there in northern Ontario in winter? We had hand-fired 4-6-2 Pacific locomotive No. 5101 and a train of four passenger cars. We were due into Nipigon, 72 miles from Port Arthur, around midnight and were to take coal there.

The 5101's tender had no side walkways, so I began my balancing act on the coal pile. Filling up the bunker was no problem—the fuel had not frozen in the chute—and we took on a load of at least 8 tons. After I had released the chain and the chute should have closed, in the dark I could hear some coal still trickling out of the chute onto the ground. In a hurry to resume our journey, without thinking I yanked quickly on the chain to close the chute—as I was standing below it. This did close the chute, but it also brought down a bucket or two of coal directly on top of me! A good deal of it went right down the back of my neck, making for a very uncomfortable situation.

I retreated to the warmth of the Pacific's vestibule cab as we pulled up to the water tank and then to the station for a passenger stop. While we were at the station, I put a good supply of coal into the firebox to get us out of town, and to give me a few minutes to peel off my overalls, sweater, and shirt to free myself of the coal that was certainly an irritation. My engineer and I had a good laugh over this, but after getting dressed again, it was a pleasure speeding along and heading for home, with an arrival time of 3:15 a.m.

I guess you could say that the first event was unavoidable because of Mother Nature's intervention, but the second occasion was a lesson well learned. I still chuckle when I think of these two incidents, humorous moments in the everyday life of a steam locomotive fireman.—William J. Cole

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MAGAZINE

Minidoka: place of enchantment

Memories of boyhood rides in Idaho with an uncle who was a Union Pacific conductor

There's not much there anymore, and few people know that Minidoka, Idaho, was once a busy railroad point. It was also my youthful idea of heaven.

That's where my Union Pacific Railroad conductor uncle, Jim Ryan, and his wife Lola lived. There were maybe 50 houses and other buildings in the town, plus a grade school. There was a large brick depot with a baggage and freight area, an operator's office, and a waiting room complete with newsstand.

A huge coal chute stood over the tracks along with a water tank's spout. These served the steam locomotives powering the many passenger and freight trains that passed through each day. The exception was the diesel-pow-

ered *City of Portland* streamliner.

We lived in Pocatello then, and my parents would occasionally let me take the train the 60 miles or so west to visit Jim and Lola in Minidoka. While there, I could stand at the depot and see nothing but sagebrush and desert and sky in every direction.

For a long time Jim was conductor on the motor car. Also called the "Galloping Goose," this self-propelled unit featured an engineer's cab in front, an engine room, baggage and express area, and a passenger section at the rear. It ran between Minidoka and Buhl, Idaho, 74 miles west at the end of a branch. While working on this run, Uncle Jim wore the official UP dark suit with

brass buttons and the stiff cap with the word CONDUCTOR spelled out.

Ann Schenk of the Minidoka County Museum in Rupert recalls that the town's teenagers would ride the Galloping Goose to Rupert each weekday for high school and ride it back home in the afternoon.

This was during World War II, 1943-44, when troop trains often would come through, always stopping for fuel and water. I was 14 or 15 and, perhaps influenced by Mickey Rooney's hawking goods on trains in the movie *Young Tom Edison*, I decided to do my part.

I made a deal with the lady who ran the Barkalow Bros. newsstand in the depot. She would leave a basket filled

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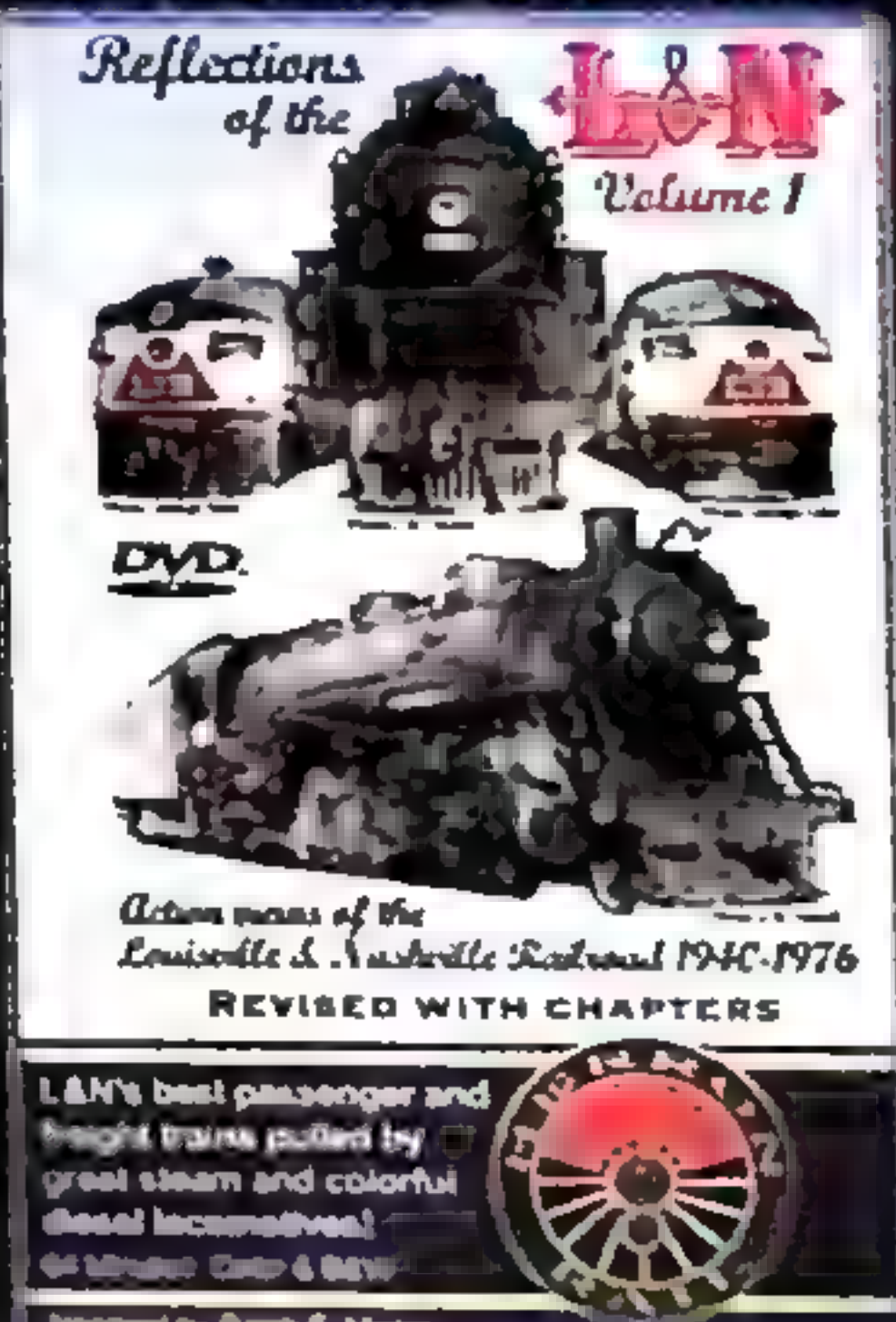
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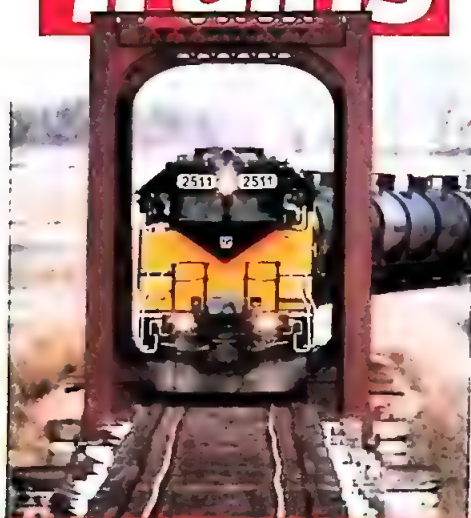
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The Way It Was

with candy, gum, cigarettes, and magazines with the operator for me to pick up at night.

After receiving permission to board from the troop train's conductor, I would walk the aisles of the Pullman cars, softly calling, "Candy, gum, smokes." Before long a voice would say, "You got any Camels?" or "You got anything to read?"

A hand would reach from behind the curtain, with money, to be replaced by the requested goods, plus change.

I would later return the nearly empty basket and the cash to the operator and head for Jim's house, feeling I had done something to help the war effort.

Jim later bid on, and won, the run between Twin Falls, Idaho, and Wells, Nev. At 246 miles round trip, it was said to be the longest on the Union Pacific.

We left Minidoka in the late afternoon and rode to Twin Falls, where we

had dinner at a café near the depot.

"You'd better eat big," Jim would tell me, "cause it might be a couple of days before we get another meal."

The train was a mixed, composed of a steam locomotive, several freight cars, and a combination baggage-coach on the rear. The combine was not exactly modern, having kerosene lamps for light and a small coal stove for heat.

We ran south from Twin Falls, paralleling U.S. 93. We passed Amsterdam and Hollister, Idaho. At Idavada, on the Nevada border, Jim told me to watch for the neon sign of a new gambling joint built in the middle of the desert. That was the beginning of the bustling community of Jackpot, which today draws millions of Idaho dollars to its games each year.

Only once did we have passengers. A group of younger women and an overdressed hag with a lot of jewelry got on



Roy L. Peterson photo, Rory Peterson collection

Vindication

A 56-year-old color image endures

On August 13, 1955, around noon, Dad stood on the edge of Main Street in Caledonia, Ill., and snapped this photo just before getting wind-whipped and cinder-pelted by speeding Chicago & North Western 4-6-2 No. 617. Built in 1917 and thus six years younger than Dad, the Pacific nonetheless was scrapped the following July. The now-seedy streamlined speed queen was gussied up in 1941 for the *Minnesota 400*. Today she's on train 504, one of four daily passenger runs each way between Madison, Wis., and Chicago, via Beloit. I can visualize Dad and that satisfied smile we saw so many times as he folded his postcard Kodak and himself, and a kid or two or three, back into his '41 Buick and headed for home on that sunny Saturday. Meanwhile, he was betting on tricky, expensive, and slow-speed color-negative films. I know he agonized over their higher cost as compared with black-and-white films, given that he had eight growing youngsters to provide for. Vindication was his return from the drug store photo counter, unwrapping this shiny prize among his other gems that summer. Smiling all over, I bet.—Rory Peterson

at Twin Falls. They got cold during the night and demanded blankets, which we did not have. The group rode all the way to Wells. It was years later that I figured out that they were on a brothel exchange program.

At Wells, we switched cars onto the Southern Pacific and Western Pacific interchange tracks before hitting the hay in the wee hours of the morning.

Our hotel was near the SP and WP tracks. Once I heard a strange sound and got up to look out the window. I saw a sight that has stayed with me more than 60 years: a giant SP 4-8-8-2 cab-forward rushing past with a troop train. Then there was another . . . and another. I didn't get much sleep that exciting night.

The return trips to Twin Falls and Minidoka were great fun too, and were usually in the daytime. I even got to ride on the engine once.

Union Pacific built the Twin Falls–Wells branch in the 1920s to serve promising mines in the area and northern Nevada's livestock industry. But the mines played out, and trucks replaced the train as the main carriers of cattle. UP tore up most of the line in the 1970s, but portions of the grade can be seen from the highway today.

With the advent of the diesel locomotive, there was no longer a need for trains to stop at Minidoka. The coal chute was taken down and so were the water tanks. And finally the lovely old depot was razed.

The town's houses are now occupied by workers on the surrounding farms, and the kids are bused to school in Rupert. Almost all the land I saw as desert 60 years ago is now under cultivation.

It's a different world now, but the Minidoka I loved then will be alive as long as I'm around.—*Bill Ryan* ■



W. B. Wolverton photo, W. H. Wolverton collection

UP train 339, the mixed from Twin Falls, Idaho, nears its destination of Wells, Nev., in fall 1943. Is Uncle Jim the conductor today?

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Car Stop



George Krambles, Krambles-Peterson Archive





Two photos: R. V. Mehlenbeck, Krambles-Peterson Archive

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Ottawa, Ontario, was just a settlement called Bytown across the Ottawa River from Gatineau, Quebec, until it was designated the future seat of Canada's government in 1857. A decade later, the Dominion of Canada was established, and in 1870 the city's first horsecar line opened. Electric operations began in 1891, followed two years later by the formation of the Ottawa Electric Railway Co., which ran the lines until the Ottawa Transportation Commission took over in 1948. A quirk of the OER-OTC system was the avoidance of the numeral 7 in car numbers, a custom instituted in the 1890s after OER car No. 37 struck and killed a child. As of 1951, OTC ran seven rail lines and six bus routes. Its 127 streetcars were all products of the Ottawa Car Co., except for 10 secondhand-

ers from Toronto. OTC's newest cars were Nos. 1000–1003 of 1947, the last standard (non-PCC) streetcars built in North America. They had short lives, for OTC ended regular rail operations on April 30, 1959. Above, 10-year-old car 1002 passes Union Station (right edge of photo) in Confederation Square on July 6, 1957. Above left, on the same day, well-maintained No. 866 (Ottawa Car, 1927) leads two others westbound on Sparks Street at Bank. At lower left, another view in Confederation Square finds car 830 passing 904 (built 1927 and '33, respectively) and two others, on August 5, 1958.



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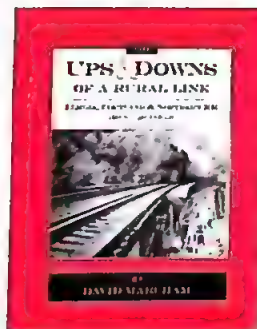
More than ever, this new edition of veteran railroad journalist Fred Frailey's absorbing chronicle of the last days of the pre-Amtrak, private-sector passenger train is an essential part of the literature of the vanish. While most passenger books celebrate the glory days of the limited—think Lucius Beebe or Arthur Dubin—Frailey's book dares to show that, even in the gloomy 1960s, some railroads still served passengers with pride. Certainly he covers the companies that threw in the towel: Penn Central and the mess it inherited from NYC, Pennsy, and New Haven; Southern Pacific's very public about-face; the heartbreak of the original *California Zephyr*. But he also shows how some railroads resisted the tide and did their best to run good trains: Santa Fe with its *Chiefs*, Kansas City Southern and its feisty *Southern Belle*, Baltimore & Ohio with its updated *Capitol Limited*. And the publisher's version is an improvement over the



original from Kalmbach, with better paper, a more appealing cover design, and, best of all, a brand-new 12-page chapter on Illinois Central and its effort to field a *Panama Limited* worthy of the name. Throughout, Frailey weaves the story with excellent photos, route diagrams, and his trademark irresistible prose.—Kevin P. Keefe

Twilight of the Great Trains. By Fred W. Frailey. Indiana University Press, 601 N. Morton Street, Bloomington, IN 47404-3797; (800) 842-6796; www.iupress.indiana.edu; hardcover; 11 x 8 1/2 in.; 216 pages, 21 color photos, 126 B&W photos, 41 maps; \$49.95.

Other Books



This wonderful book examines a component of the Lehigh Valley Railroad in central New York state, the Elmira, Cortland & Northern. The 139-mile EC&N was formed in 1867 and became the Elmira & Cortland Branch of the LV in 1896. Traffic peaked about 20 years later, and by 1967 only 26 miles remained; today there are only 3. Author Marcham, an LV man who once worked the line, traces its entire history. Of special interest is a chapter describing operations on a typical day in 1891, as well as harrowing tales of a 1920 passenger train derailment and the hardships of fighting snow in the 1940s. This fine work is a model for others who would chronicle their local lines.—Robert S. McGonigal

The Ups and Downs of a Rural Line for America. By David Marcham. DeWitt Historical Center/The History Center in Tompkins County, 401 E. State Street, Ithaca, NY 14850; (607) 273-5754; www.thehistorycenter.net; softcover; 8 1/2 x 11 inches; 160 pages; 150 photos, maps, timetables, etc; \$19.95.

No railroad could match the Chicago, Burlington & Quincy in the deployment of stainless-steel passenger trains. That much is abundantly clear in this tribute to the latter-day "Q" and its gleaming *Zephyrs* and other trains. Written and compiled by veteran passenger-train author Geoffrey H. Doughty, the book is neatly organized into sections covering the three key Burlington routes—Chicago-Twin Cities, Chicago-Denver, and Chicago-Kansas City—plus other notable operations such as the Q's Fort Worth & Denver and Colorado & Southern subsidiaries; its joint operation of other Hill Lines trains; and its famous Chicago commuter service. Doughty provides concise, detailed text on all these subjects, but the real attraction is the selection of razor-sharp



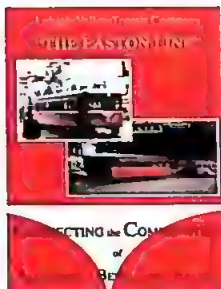
color photos. You don't have to be a Q fan to fall in love with these rakish trains. Notables include the *Denver Zephyr* on its fast overnight run, the *Morning* and *Afternoon Zephyrs* hustling along the Mississippi River beneath towering Wisconsin bluffs, and the dome-festooned *California Zephyr* departing grandly from Chicago. And beauty is not all stainless: check out perfectly matched orange-and-green *Empire Builder* and two-tone green *North Coast Limited* on the Q's racetrack west from Chicago. A special treat is a chapter about Burlington's steam excursion trains of the early '60s, especially 4-8-4 No. 5632, closing out its career in roaring fashion.—K.P.K.

Burlington Route Through Passenger Service, In Color. By Geoffrey H. Doughty. Morning Sun Books, 9 Pheasant Lane, Scotch Plains, NJ 07076; www.morning-sunbooks.com; 8½ x 11 in.; hardcover; 203 photos, 41 illustrations and postcards; \$59.95.

DVD

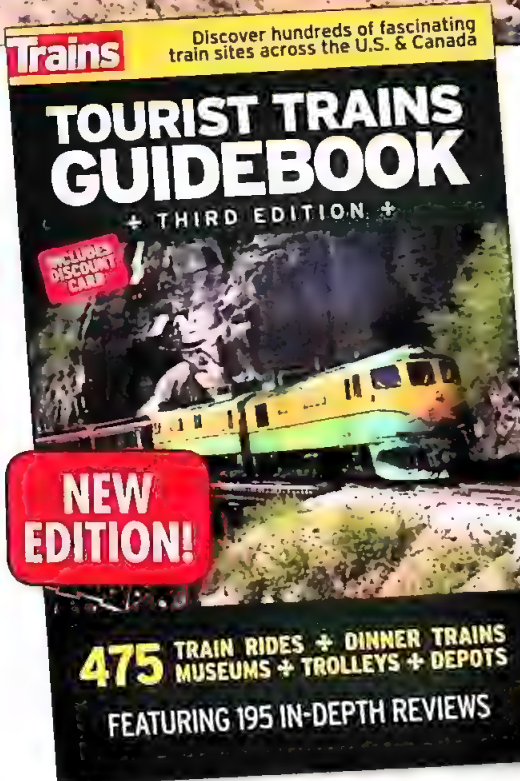
This program covers the Allentown-Bethlehem-Easton, Pa., line of interurban Lehigh Valley Transit in its final two years of operation, 1947-49, through the mostly color 8mm films of Gerhard Salomon. Stars of the show are the four ex-Dayton & Troy lightweight Cincinnati curved-side cars LVT acquired in 1938 for *Easton Limited* service. Also of interest is old car 812 decked out in a snappy yellow livery, box motors with TROLLEY FREIGHT emblazoned on their sides, a snow sweeper in action, and a fantrip with unique car 940. Numerous locations in and between cities are pictured, from both trackside and on-board vantage points, including bustling downtown streets and charming side-of-the-road running. There's extensive coverage of the last day of revenue service on August 14, 1949, plus some non-revenue equipment moves and a fantrip after that date—and some heartbreaking scenes of cars being scrapped and burned. Closing the program are some delightful shots of Salomon running LVT cars in the late '40s, and at the controls of a Rockhill Trolley Museum car in 2007.—R.S.M.

The Easton Line. Rockhill Trolley Museum, 6059 Allentown Boulevard, Box 104, Harrisburg, PA 17112; 55 minutes; \$18.95 plus \$3 shipping and handling.



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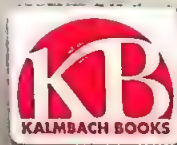


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Ancient Amtrak history 101

Do you remember the six-week *Zephyr* link, or the (not *Silver*) *Meteor*?



Philip C. Johnson

A freight GP9 heads No. 18 at Ogden June 6.

If you fancy yourself playing in an Amtrak trivia game as the passenger railroad turns 40, here are a few tips. Upon Rio Grande's late decision to stay out, its own *Zephyr* [pages 64-69] was mandated to connect at Ogden, Utah, with Amtrak's *City of San Francisco*. With Salt Lake City as its traditional western passenger terminal, the Grande ran only a lone coach (above) as No. 18 for the first 37 miles out of Ogden. So few people rode the stub train that it lasted only six weeks, making its last run on June 14, 1971; a van took its place. That route today is "rare mileage," as most of the line is gone.

Author Bruce Goldberg's 1981 book, *Amtrak, the First Decade*, is a gold mine for details of train names and routes in the early years. Consider the lead photo of his "Growing Up . . ." story [pages 50-59] at Sanford, Fla., of the *Meteor*, taken September 18, 1972.

This is not the *Silver Meteor*. On page 140 of his book, in the "New York-Florida" chapter, Goldberg explains that

during summer 1972, the *Silver Meteor* and *Champion* were combined into a single train, the *Meteor*, which split at Savannah. (In December 1971, Amtrak moved the *Silver Meteor* from its traditional route via Columbia, S.C., to the half-hour-faster Charleston, S.C., route. Today the routes are called the "S Line" and "A Line," respectively, for SCL predecessors Seaboard Air Line and Atlantic Coast Line.) One section ran via Jacksonville to Orlando and St. Petersburg; the other bypassed Jacksonville and followed the normal route to Miami. Amtrak would combine the *Silver Meteor* and *Champion* again in fall 1975, spring 1976, and winter 1977, splitting the train at Jacksonville.

The same page also covers the history of a few trains whose names, some of them SCL carryovers, are long forgotten by us who aren't students of Amtrak's early Florida service, including *Carolina Coast*, *Carolina Special*, *Florida Special*, *Miamian*, and *Vacationer*.

"Birds-Eye View" from a structure

In this issue, our "Bird's-Eye View" photo [pages 76-77] is not taken from an airplane, as most have been, but from a structure—the Ambassador Bridge linking Detroit and Windsor, Ontario. The suspension bridge is one of two highway links between the cities, the other being a tunnel under the Detroit River connecting the downtowns.

So in this June 1965 photo [left], we look at the "Bird's-Eye View" vantage point as Norfolk & Western train 302, the overnight *Detroit Limited* from St. Louis, passes under the bridge's north end and alongside the ladder track of the Chesapeake & Ohio "boat yard" on the left, and the remnants of the old Fort Street Union Depot coachyard tracks on the right. The train is headed for Fort Street, and the E8/E7 duo will flip back an hour or so later on the daytime *Wabash Cannon Ball* to St. Louis.

This consist is classic for the overnight train: two storage mail cars, an RPO, two coaches, and a 1950 ACF Wabash 12&4 *Blue-series* sleeping car. The first car behind the E's is an ex-Wabash car freshly repainted for N&W, belying the passenger optimism of the period, perhaps, from the October 1964 merger eight months before.—*Dave Ingles*



H. G. Goerke; J. David Ingles collection

N&W 302 rolls under the Ambassador Bridge.

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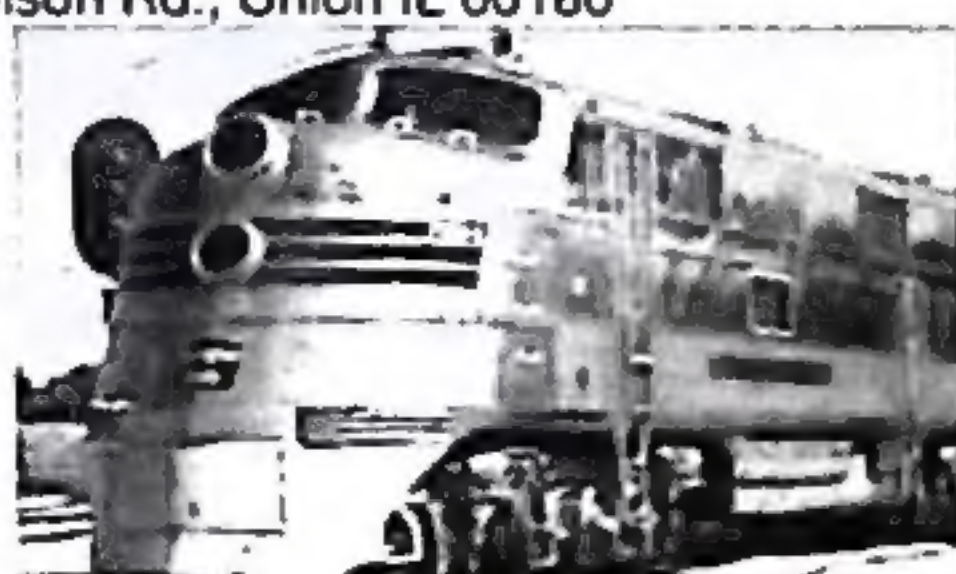
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Fletcher Swan

UP's Deco depot in Las Vegas

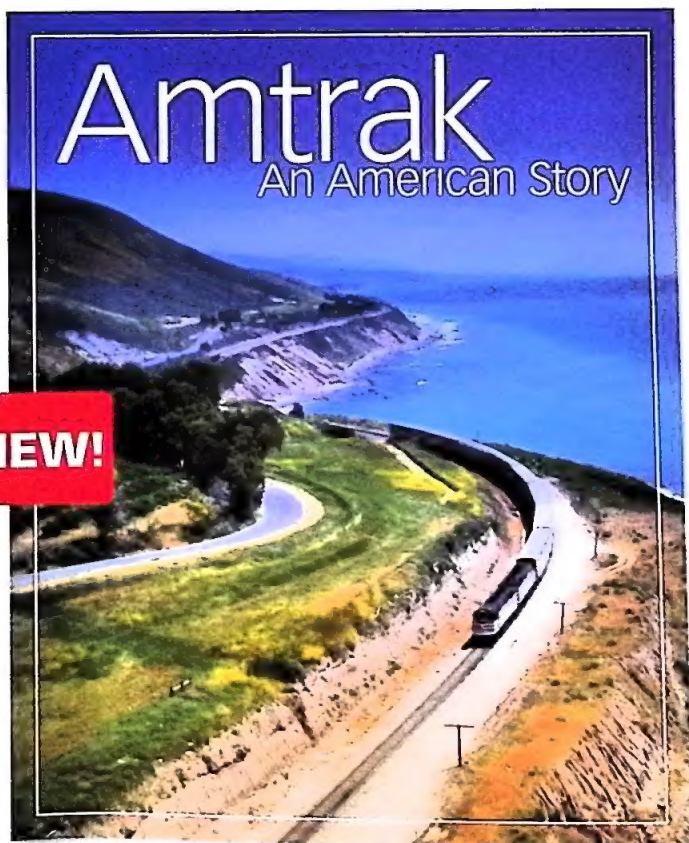
When the builders of the San Pedro, Los Angeles & Salt Lake Railroad arrived at the spot in southern Nevada that they designated Water Station No. 25, none of them could have predicted that within a few decades the place would become one of the most popular recreational destinations in the world. Las Vegas' first passenger station was an old coach, set up at the foot of Fremont Street when the Union Pacific-controlled SPLA&SL opened in 1905. This temporary depot was replaced in 1909 by a substantial structure of the same Spanish Mission style as several others on the line. In 1931, two events occurred that would radically change the area: Work began on the nearby Boulder (now Hoover) Dam, and Nevada legalized gambling. The Vegas boom was on. Something more in keeping with the new spirit

of the place was in order, so in 1940 UP replaced the old depot with this one, designed in a variant of the Art Deco style known as Streamline Moderne. The railroad's shield and "Route of the Streamliners and the Challengers" sign—both rendered in neon, of course—faced up casino-lined Fremont Street. In 1956, UP augmented the top train on the route, the transcontinental *City of Los Angeles*, with the *City of Las Vegas* out of L.A. The "Crapshooter Commuter" initially ran with GM Aerotrain equipment, switched to an E9 and coaches in 1957, became triweekly in '58, was renamed *Las Vegas Holiday Special* in '62, and quit in 1968. By that time, UP had razed the 1940 depot and put up the Union Plaza Hotel, whose ground floor sported rail passenger facilities along with the requisite casino. ■



The journey begins

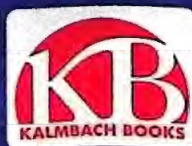
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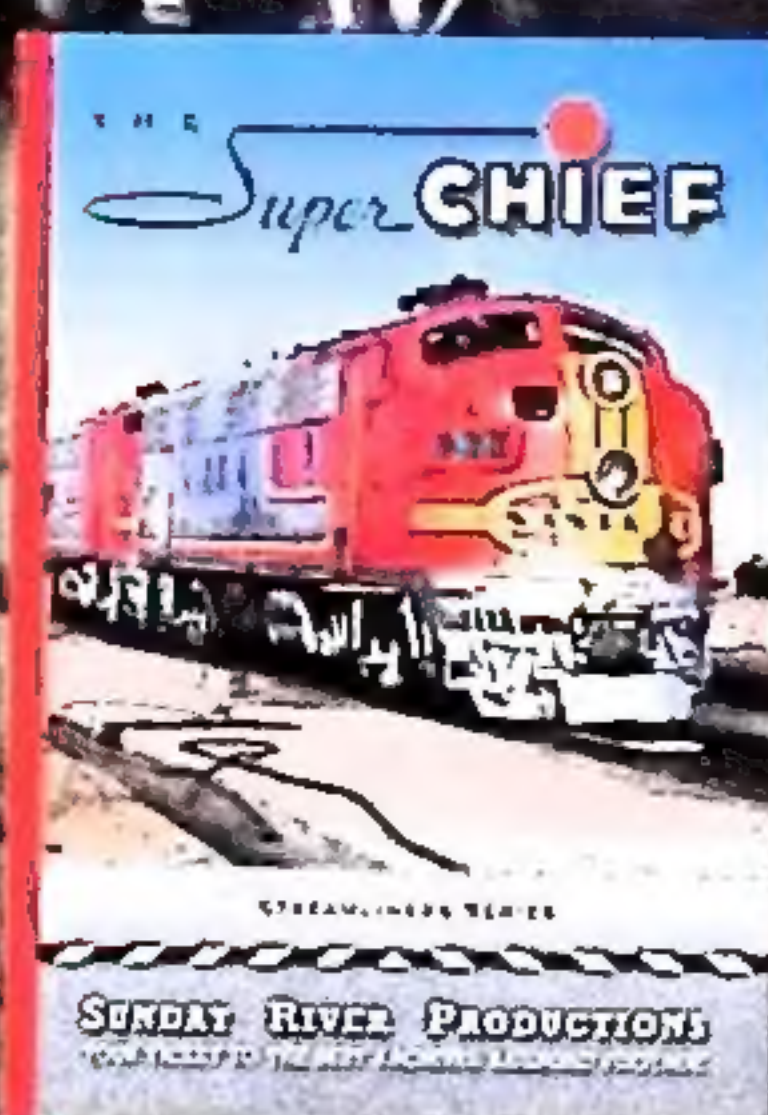
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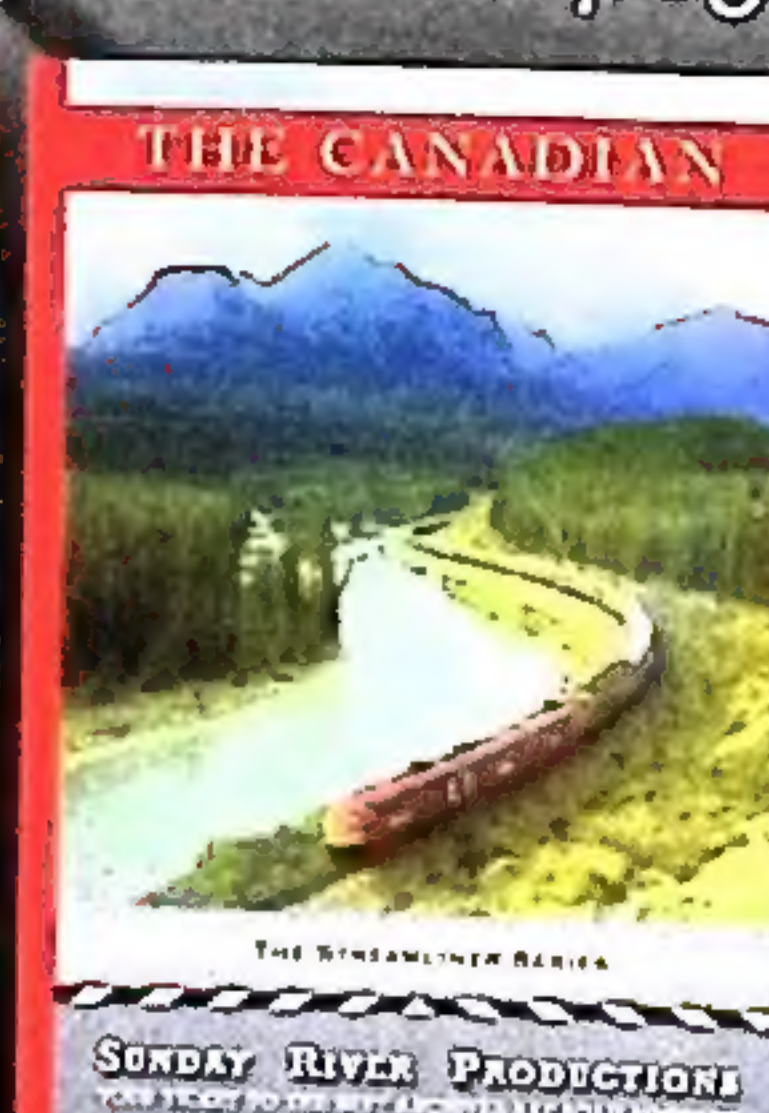
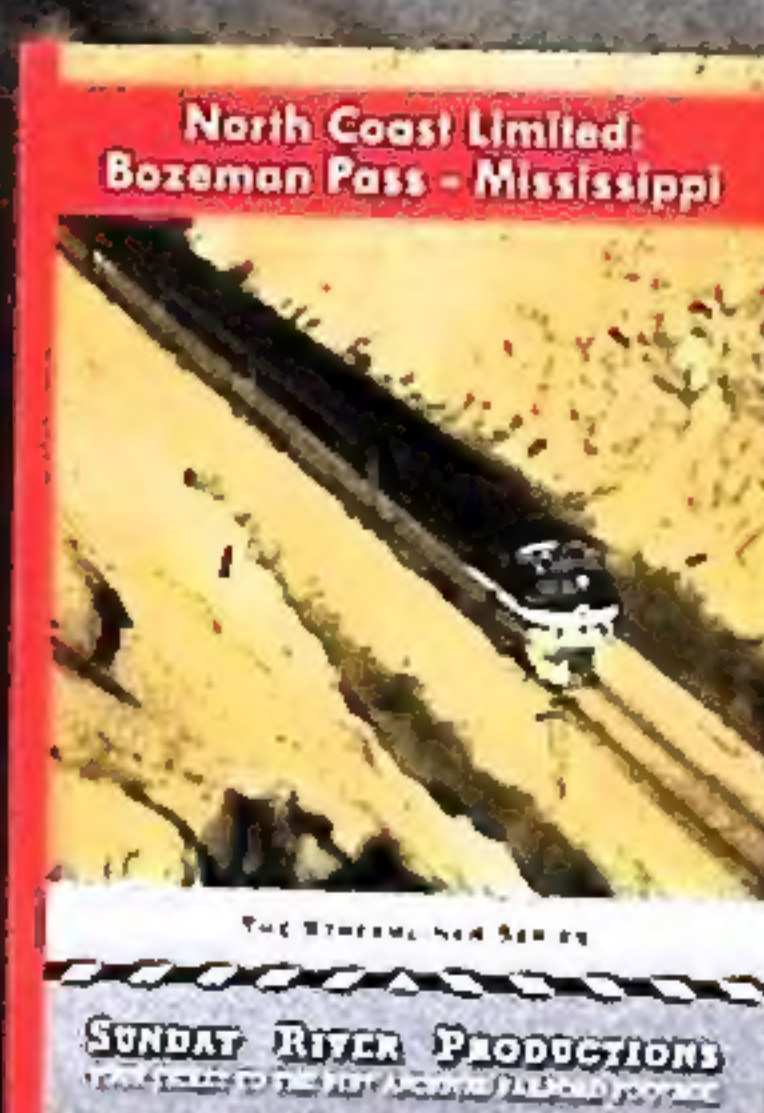
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